

AN
IMPARTIAL REPORT
OF THE
DEBATES

THAT OCCUR IN THE
TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

In the Course of the Sixth Session of the Seventeenth Parliament
of Great Britain, called to meet at Westminster,
on Thursday the 29th of October, 1795.

WITH
SOME ACCOUNT OF THE RESPECTIVE SPEAKERS,
AND
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

INCLUDING COPIES OF ALL
STATE PAPERS, TREATIES, CONVENTIONS, &c.

By WILLIAM WOODFALL,
AND ASSISTANTS.

VOL. IV.

BEING THE THIRD SESSION OF DEBATES WRITTEN AND
PUBLISHED BY THE REPORTER.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY T. CHAPMAN, No. 151, FLEET-STREET.

1796.

PROPRIETOR

DEBATES

OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
IN SENATE
JANUARY 1871



PRINTED BY

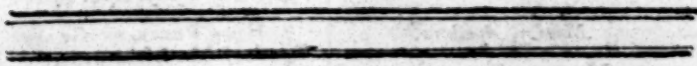
JOHN W. WATKINS, PRINTING OFFICE

NEW YORK: 1871

ALBANY

THE STATE OF NEW YORK
IN SENATE
JANUARY 1871

END



C O N T E N T S
FOR
THE FOURTH VOLUME
OF
THE THIRD SESSION OF
Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports.
Being the Sixth Session of the Seventeenth Parliament of Great
Britain, assembled October 29, 1795.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.		Page.
<i>Monday, April 4.</i>		
NOTICES OF MOTIONS.		
Speech of Mr. Francis	Page 1	<i>ib.</i>
General Smith		<i>ib.</i>
Mr. Mainwaring		<i>ib.</i>
Mr. Lechmere	2	<i>ib.</i>
the Chancellor of the Exchequer		<i>ib.</i>
<i>Tuesday, April 5.</i>		
SHADWELL'S DIVORCE BILL	<i>ib.</i>	
Houfe in a Committee	<i>ib.</i>	
COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX BILL	<i>ib.</i>	
Speech of Mr. Ald. Newnham	<i>ib.</i>	
General Smith	3	
the Chancellor of the Exchequer	4	
Mr. Grey	<i>ib.</i>	
DOG TAX.	5	
Speech of Mr. Dent	<i>ib.</i>	
Col. Stanley	8	
the Chancellor of the Exchequer	<i>ib.</i>	
Mr. Harrifon		
<i>Friday, April 8.</i>		
COLONEL CAWTHORNE		14
Speech of General Smith		15
Lord Tryconnel		<i>ib.</i>
Mr. Grey		<i>ib.</i>
Mr. Francis		<i>ib.</i>
the Chancellor of the Exchequer		<i>ib.</i>
DOG TAX.		<i>ib.</i>
Speech of Mr. Dent		<i>ib.</i>
FINANCIAL PAPERS.		16
Motion of Mr. Grey relative thereto		<i>ib.</i>
BARRACKS.		<i>ib.</i>
Speech of Gen. Smith		<i>ib.</i>
the Secretary at War		19, 31
Mr. M. A. Taylor		26
Mr. Fox		31, 46
the Chancellor of the Exchequer		38
Mr. W. Smith		40
Mr. Courtenay		41
Mr. Grey		44, 45, 46

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
— Mr. Steele	45, 46		
— Mr. Sheridan	ib.	Thursday, April 14.	
Monday, April 11.		HIGH PRICE OF GRAIN	99
MILLERS BILL	47	Speech of Mr. Lechmere	ib.
Speech of Mr. Popham	ib.	— Mr. C. Dundas	ib.
— the Speaker	ib.	MILLERS BILL.	100
FINANCE	ib.	Speech of Mr. Lechmere	ib.
Speech of the Chancellor of the		— Sir F. Basset	ib.
Exchequer	ib.	Friday, April 15.	
SLAVE TRADE.	48	DOG TAX.	ib.
Speech of Mr. Francis	ib. 51, 76	Speech of the Chancellor of the	
— Mr. Secretary		Exchequer	ib.
Dundas	50, 73, 77	— Mr. Dent	101
— Mr. Serjeant Adair	60, 69	— Mr. Jolliffe	ib.
— Mr. Fox	62, 77	WESTMINSTER POLICE BILL.	ib.
— Sir W. Young	69	Speech of Gen. Smith	ib.
— the Chancellor of the	70	— the Chancellor of the Ex-	
Exchequer		chequer	ib.
— the Secretary at War	71	Monday, April 18.	
— Mr. Este	72	DUTCH PROPERTY BILL.	102
— Mr. W. Smith	73, 77	The House in a Committee thereon	ib.
— Mr. Robinson	75	THE COUNT DE SOMERIEUL.	ib.
— Mr. Manning	76	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib. 112
Tuesday, April 12.		— the Secretary at War	105, 106
MISDEMEANOUR COSTS BILL	78	— the Speaker	ib.
Speech of Mr. Henniker Major	ib.	— General Smith	107
— Mr. Serjeant Adair	ib.	— Mr. Fox	108, 111
EXPIRING AND EXPIRED LAWS		— the Chancellor of the	
BILL.	ib.	Exchequer	110
Speech of Mr. Abbott	ib.	The Budget	112
— Mr. Serjeant Adair	ib.	Speech of the Chancellor of	
Wednesday, April 13.		the Exchequer	ib.
CUTTING BUTCHERS PETI-		SUBSTITUTES FOR THE TAX ON	
TION	80	PRINTED COTTONS.	113
Speech of Mr. Mainwaring	ib.	DUTY ON HATS.	114
— General Smith	ib.	ARMY, ORDNANCE, and	
— Mr. Lechmere	81	NAVY	115
WEST INDIA EXPEDITION	ib.	SCARCITY OF MONEY	119
Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib. 83	NEW DUTY ON WINE	121
— Mr. Dundas	82	The LOAN	123
— Mr. Fox	ib.	Speech of Mr. Grey	126, 147
— the Chancellor of the		— the Chancellor of the Ex-	
Exchequer	ib.	chequer	133, 143, 145, 146
THE COUNT DE SOMERIEUL'S		— Mr. Fox	134, 145
LETTER.	83	— Ald. Newnham	146
Speech of Gen. Tarleton	ib. 85	— Mr. Steele	147
— the Secretary at War	83, 85, 86	— Mr. Sheridan	ib.
— Mr. Fox	84, 85	— Gen. Smith	148
— the Chancellor of the		— Mr. Sec. Dundas	ib.
Exchequer	ib.	Tuesday, April 19.	
— Mr. Sheridan	ib.	BARRACKS	150
— Mr. Fox	16	Speech of Mr. Grey	ib. 151
— Mr. Dent	ib.	— Mr. Steele	ib.
— Mr. Lechmere	87	WAYS	

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
WAYS AND MEANS	151	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	168 169, 180, 183
Speech of Mr. W. Smith	ib.	the Speaker	168
the Chancellor of the Exchequer	153, 155	the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib. 182, 183
Mr. Francis	154	Mr. Secretary	173, 181, 182
Mr. Grey	155	Dundas	181, 182, 184
FRENCH EMIGRANTS	156	Mr. Fox	ib.
Speech of Mr. Martin	ib.	Mr. Grey	ib.
SLAVE CARRYING BILL	ib.		
Speech of Mr. H. Thornton	ib.		
the Speaker	ib.		
SCARCITY OF CORN	ib.		
Speech of Mr. Lechmere	ib.		
LONGITUDE by SEA.	ib.		
Speech of Sir P. Stephens	ib.		
		Friday, April 22.	
Wednesday, April 20.			
PEWTER POT BILL.	158	NEW WINE TAX	185
Speech of Mr. Dent	159	Speech of Mr. Rose	ib. 186
Mr. Buxton	ib.	Gen. Smith	185
Mr. Francis	ib.	Mr. Sheridan	186
General Smith	160	FINANCIAL PAPERS	ib.
Mr. Fox	ib. 161	Speech of Mr. Grey	ib.
Sir W. Young	ib.	DOG TAX	ib.
the Secretary at War	ib.	Speech of Mr. Dent	ib.
Mr. Lechmere	ib.	Mr. Sheridan	187
Mr. Courtenay	ib.	GENERAL INCLOSURE BILL.	ib.
		Speech of Sir J. Sinclair	ib. 188
Thursday, April 21.		Mr. Curwen	187
		Mr. Duncombe	ib.
		Mr. Hussey	ib.
		Mr. Lechmere	188
		Capt. Berkeley	ib.
		Lord Sheffield	ib.
		Mr. Powys	ib.
		Monday, April 25.	
STAMPS	164		
Speech of the Lord Mayor	ib.	JOURNALS OF THE HOUSE	189
Mr. Sheridan	ib. 165	Speech of the Speaker	ib.
Mr. Serjeant Adair	164	NEW WINE TAX	ib.
the Speaker	ib.	Speech of Mr. Rose	ib. 190
QUAKERS	165	Mr. Sheridan	ib.
Speech of Mr. Serj. Adair	ib. 166	CITY OF LONDON COURT OF	
FEES—CLERKS IN PUBLIC OFFICES	ib.	CONSCIENCE	ib.
Speech of Mr. Dent	ib.	Speech of Mr. Ald. Lushington	ib. 191
Mr. Sheridan	ib.	Mr. Jeckyll	190
TAX ON HATS.	ib.	Mr. M. Robinson	191
Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib. 167	the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.
the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.	COLONEL CAWTHORNE	192
BARRACKS	ib.	Speech of Gen. Smith	ib.
Motion for Papers relative thereto by Mr. Grey	ib.	Lord Tyrconnel	ib.
EAST INDIA PAPERS	ib.	Mr. Dent	ib.
Speech of Mr. Sec. Dundas	ib.	DOG TAX	ib.
General Smith	ib.	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib. 205
NAVY DEBT	163	the Secretary at War	196
Motion by Mr. Grey respecting the same	ib.	Mr. S. R. Penton	193
COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX BILL	ib.	Mr. Buxton	ib.
Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.	Mr. Dent	199, 205
WAR IN THE WEST INDIES	ib.	Mr. Courtenay	201
		the Chancellor of the Exchequer	204
		Mr. Lechmere	205
		ARMY EXTRAORDINARIES	ib.
			Medica

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Motion by Mr. Grey, relative thereto	205	— Mr. W. Smith	228
WESTMINSTER POLICE BILL	206	— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.
Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib. 207	BLACK LEAD DUTY	229
— Mr. Buxton	ib.	House in a Committee thereupon	ib.
— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.	CORN	ib.
— Mr. Powys	206	Speech of Mr. Lechmere	ib.
— Mr. J. H. Browne	ib.	CITY MILITIA.	ib.
— Sir W. Young	207	House in a Committee thereupon	ib.
— Mr. M. Robinson	ib.		
— Mr. Secretary Dundas	ib.	<i>Wednesday, April 27.</i>	
ARMY EXTRAORDINARIES	208	SUMMER THEATRE	230
Speech of Mr. Grey	ib. 209	Speech of Sir W. Lewis	ib.
— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.	— Mr. Mainwaring	ib.
— Mr. Steele	209	INDEMNIFICATION OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S CLERKS	ib.
— Mr. M. Robinson	ib.	Speech of Mr. Jekyll	ib.
— the Secretary at War	ib.	— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	231
— Mr. Sheridan	ib.	WAYS AND MEANS	ib.
<i>Tuesday, April 26.</i>		DOG TAX	ib.
CONVEYANCE OF NEWSPAPERS, &c.	213	Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.
Speech of Mr. Canning	ib. 219	— Mr. Dent	232, 235
— Mr. Bouverie	ib.	— Mr. Jolliffe	231
— Mr. Harrison	ib.	— Mr. Buxton	233
— Mr. Francis	ib.	— Mr. Courtenay	ib.
— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.	— Sir R. Salisbury	234
CORN BILL	220	— Mr. Martin	ib.
Speech of the Lord Mayor	ib.	— Lord Sheffield	ib.
RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS	ib.	— General Macleod	235
Speech of Mr. Ser. Adair	ib.	— Mr. Sumner	ib.
— Mr. Wilberforce	222	RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS.	ib.
— Mr. Francis	ib.	Speech of Mr. Ser. Adair	ib.
— Mr. Martin	223	— J. H. Browne	ib.
— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.	<i>Thursday, April 28.</i>	
— Sir W. Dolben	ib.	DOG TAX.	236
— Mr. Lechmere	ib.	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib.
— Mr. Wigley	224	— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.
SLAVE-CARRYING BILL	ib.	HAT DUTY	ib.
Speech of Mr. Wilberforce	ib.	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib.
— Gen. Tarleton	ib. 226	— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	237
— Mr. Jenkinson	225	— Mr. W. Smith	ib.
— Mr. Ryder	ib. 226	NAVY BILLS	238
— Mr. Rose	ib.	Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.
— Mr. Sec. Dundas	ib. 227	COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX BILL	ib.
— Mr. Barham	226	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	ib.
— Mr. Francis	ib.	— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	ib.
— the Chancellor of the Exchequer	227, 218	CURATES	ib.
— Lord Sheffield	227	Speech of Mr. Jodrell	ib.
HAT DUTY	228		
Speech of Mr. Martin	ib.		
— Mr. Rose	ib.		

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
the Speaker	238	MILITIA	327
General Smith	239	Motion of the Solicitor General	
M., Sheridan	ib.	relative thereto	ib.
the Chancellor of the Ex-		LONGITUDE	328
chequer	ib.	Report of the Committee brought	
Sir W. Scott	ib.	up by Sir P. Stephens	ib.
WEST INDIES.	ib.	GAME LAWS	ib.
Speech of Mr.		Speech of Mr. Curwen	ib. 329
Sec. Dundas	ib. 264, 265, 266, 267	Sir R. Sutton	328
Mr. Grey	253, 265	Mr. Jolliffe	ib.
Mr. Sheri-		Mr. Buxton	ib.
dan	254, 263, 264, 265, 269	the Solicitor General	ib.
the Chancellor of the		COLONEL CAWTHORNE	329
Exchequer	263, 264, 266	Speech of Gen. Smith	ib. 340, 350
Gen. Tarleton	263	the Speaker	349
Mr. Fox	264, 266	Col. Cawthorne	ib.
Gen. Smith	265, 266	Mr. Wigley	343
Mr. W. Smith	267	General Macleod	344, 348
		the Chancellor of the	
Friday, April 29.		Exchequer	346
HAY AND STRAW	268	Sir C. Morgan	349
Speech of Mr. Ald. Lushington	ib.	Gen. Tarleton	ib.
LONGITUDE	ib.	Mr. Francis	ib.
Speech of Mr. Rose	ib.	Mr. Courtenay	ib.
Mr. Hufsey	ib.	Mr. Bouverie	350
the Chancellor of the		the Solicitor General	ib.
Exchequer	ib.	SARDINIAN SUBSIDY.	351
Capt. Berkeley	ib.	Speech of the Chancellor of the	
Mr. Francis	269	Exchequer	ib.
GAME LAWS.		General Tarleton	ib.
Speech of Mr. Curwen	ib. 279	COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY	ib.
Capt. Berkeley	269	Motion respecting the Sardinian	
Sir R. Sutton	270, 274	Subsidy, by the Chancellor of the	
Mr. Buxton	270, 271	Exchequer	ib.
Mr. Fox	272	NAVY BILLS	ib.
the Chancellor of the		Speech of the Chancellor of the	
Exchequer	274	Exchequer	ib.
Mr. Francis	276, 279	RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS	352
Mr. Sheridan	276	Speech of Mr. Serj. Adair	ib.
Mr. Harrison	277	Sir R. Hill	ib.
Mr. Jenkinson	ib.	DUTIES ON SUGARS	ib.
Sir R. Salisbury	278	Resolution respecting the same	ib.
Sir J. Rous	ib.	Tuesday, May 3.	
Mr. Cocks	ib.	WINDOW TAX	353
COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY	280	Speech of Mr. Rose	ib.
Speech of the Chancellor of the		SARDINIAN SUBSIDY	ib.
Exchequer	ib.	Speech of Mr. Fox	ib. 355
Mr. Rose	ib.	the Chancellor of the	
WAYS AND MEANS.	ib.	Exchequer	354
Speech of the Chancellor of the		Mr. Francis	355
Exchequer	ib.	the Secretary at War	356
		Gen. Smith	ib.
Monday, May 2.		Mr. Harrison	ib.
LONDON MILITIA BILL	327	ALIEN BILL	ib.
Read a third time and passed	ib.	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	357
ALIEN BILL	ib.	the Solicitor General	ib.
Motion of the Attorney General		VETERINARY COLLEGE	ib.
relative thereto	ib.	Petition presented by Mr. Sumner	ib.
		Speech	

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
Speech of Gen. Tarleton	357	Gen. Smith	372
— Mr. Francis	357, 358	— Mr. Ald. Newnham	372, 373
— Mr. Sumner	357	— Mr. J. H. Browne	ib.
— Mr. Jolliffe	ib.		
— Mr. Ald. Newnham	ib.	Friday, May 6.	
— Gen. Smith	358		
— Mr. Sheridan	ib.	PUBLIC PAPERS	373
— Sir W. Dolben	ib.	Moved for and presented by Mr.	
— the Secretary at War	ib.	Sec. Dundas	ib.
RELIEF OF CURATES.		HAY AND STRAW BILL	374
Speech of the Speaker	ib. 359, 360	Read a third time	ib.
— Mr. Martin	359	COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY	ib.
— General Smith	ib. 361, 362	CHELSEA COLLEGE	ib.
— Mr. Hussey	359, 360	Motion respecting the pensioners	ib.
— Mr. Joddrell	359, 360, 361	WAYS AND MEANS	ib.
— the Chancellor of the		Motion relative thereto	ib.
Exchequer	360, 361	CORN	ib.
— Mr. Francis	360	Speech of Mr. Lechmere	ib.
— Mr. J. H. Browne	361	THE LONGITUDE	375
— Lord W. Russell	ib.	The Bill goes through a	
— Mr. Serj. Adair	ib. 362	Committee	ib.
— Sir W. Scott	361	IMPEACHMENT OF THE CON-	
— Mr. Wilberforce	ib.	DUCT OF MINISTERS	ib.
RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS	362	Speech of Mr. Grey	ib.
Speech of Sir W. Dolben	ib.	— the Chancellor of the	
— Mr. Serj. Adair	ib.	Exchequer	384
SLAVE-CARRYING BILL.	ib.	— Mr. Fox	401, 412
Motion relative thereto by Sir		— Mr. Steele	411
W. Dolben	ib.	— Mr. Sheridan	412
NEWSPAPER CONVEYANCE			
BILL	ib.	Monday, May 9.	
Motion relative thereto by Mr.			
Barnard	ib.	DAG TAX	413
Thursday, May 5.		Petition from Lewes in favour of it	ib.
GENERAL INCLOSURE BILL	363	presented by Lord Sheffield	ib.
Speech of Sir J. Sinclair	ib.	COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY	ib.
WINE DUTY BILL	ib.	ARMY EXTRAORDINARIES	ib.
Speech of Mr. Grey	ib. 364	Speech of Mr. Sheridan	414, 415
— Mr. Rose	ib.	— Gen. Tarleton	ib.
— the Chancellor of the		— the Secretary at War	ib.
Exchequer	ib. 366	— Mr. Grey	414, 416
— Gen. Smith	365	— the Chancellor of the	
— Mr. Sheridan	ib. 366, 367	Exchequer	415, 416
— Mr. Buxton	366	COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX	
COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX		BILL	ib.
BILL	367	Speech of Mr. Crewe	ib.
Speech of Mr. Raftleigh	ib.	— Lord G. Cavendish	ib. 427
— Mr. Fox	ib.	— the Chancellor of the	
— the Chancellor of the		Exchequer	ib. 424
Exchequer	368	— Mr. Ald. Newnham	417
— Mr. Grey	369	— Mr. Harrison	418
— the Attorney General	ib.	— Mr. M. Robinson	ib.
— Mr. Jekyll	370	— Mr. Buller	ib.
— Sir W. Pulteney	ib.	— the Solicitor General	ib.
— the Solicitor General	371	— Mr. Fox	ib.
— Mr. Balford	ib.	— the Secretary at War	419
— Lord Sheffield	372	— Gen. Smith	420
— Mr. M. Robinson	ib.	— Sir W. Pulteney	ib.
		— Mr. Balford	421
			Mr.

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
— Mr. M. Montague	422	Speech of Lord Sheffield	<i>ib.</i>
— Sir A. Ferguson	<i>ib.</i> 423	— the Speaker	<i>ib.</i>
— the Attorney General	<i>ib.</i>	— the Chancellor of the	
— Mr. Sheridan	<i>ib.</i>	Exchequer	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. W. Smith	424	— Mr. Dent	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. Martin	<i>ib.</i>	— Sir R. Sutton	<i>ib.</i>
AUSTRIAN LOAN	425	— Mr. Lechmere	<i>ib.</i>
Speech of Mr. Grey	<i>ib.</i>	— Mr. Buxton	<i>ib.</i>
— the Chancellor of the		SLAVE-CARRYING BILL	520
Exchequer	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of Mr. Wilberforce	<i>ib.</i>
SLAVE-CARRYING BILL	<i>ib.</i>	— Gen. Tarleton	<i>ib.</i>
Speech of Sir W. Dolben	<i>ib.</i>	— Sir W. Young	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. W. Smith	<i>ib.</i>	— Sir W. Dolben	<i>ib.</i>
WEST INDIA AND QUIBERON		— Mr. W. Smith	<i>ib.</i>
EXPEDITIONS	<i>ib.</i>		
Speech of Mr. Sheridan	<i>ib.</i>	<i>Thursday, May 12.</i>	
AUSTRIAN LOAN	<i>ib.</i>	RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS	<i>ib.</i>
Speech of Mr. Sheridan	<i>ib.</i> 428	Speech of Mr. Serj. Adair	<i>ib.</i> 521
— the Chancellor of the		— the Master of the Rolls	520
Exchequer	426, 427, 428	— Mr. W. Smith	521
— Mr. Grey	427, 428	SARDINIAN SUBSIDY	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. M. Robinson	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of Mr. Jekyll	<i>ib.</i> 522
— Mr. Sec. Dundas	<i>ib.</i>	— the Chancellor of the Ex-	
— the Speaker	<i>ib.</i>	chequer	521
<i>Tuesday, May 10.</i>		COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX	
WINE DUTY BILL	465	BILL	522
Speech of Mr. Sheridan	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of Mr. Francis	<i>ib.</i>
— the Chancellor of the Ex-		— Mr. Grey	524
chequer	<i>ib.</i>	SLAVE-CARRYING BILL	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. Grey	<i>ib.</i>	House in a committee thereupon	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. Francis	<i>ib.</i>	<i>Friday, May 13.</i>	
RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS	<i>ib.</i>	WET DOCKS	571
Speech of Mr. Francis	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of Sir W. Young	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. Serj. Adair	<i>ib.</i>	— Mr. Sheridan	<i>ib.</i>
— the Speaker	<i>ib.</i>	COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX	
MOTION FOR A CHANGE OF		BILL	572
SYSTEM	467	Speech of the Chancellor of the	
Speech of Mr. Fox	<i>ib.</i> 509	Exchequer	<i>ib.</i> 574
— the Chancellor of the		— Mr. Sheridan	572, 575
Exchequer	495	— Mr. M. Robinson	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. M. Robinson	509	— Gen. Tarleton	<i>ib.</i>
List of the Minority	514	BARRACKS	<i>ib.</i>
<i>Wednesday, May 11.</i>		Speech of Gen. Macleod	<i>ib.</i> 576
COMMITTEE ON THE CORN		— the Secretary at War	<i>ib.</i>
TRADE	515	— Mr. Grey	575
Speech of Mr. Lechmere	<i>ib.</i>	— Mr. Sheridan	576
— Mr. Francis	516	INDIA BUDGET	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. Martin	518	Mr. Sec. Dundas's Notice	<i>ib.</i>
— Mr. Buxton	<i>ib.</i>	RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS	<i>ib.</i>
List of the Minority	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of Mr. Serj. Adair	<i>ib.</i> 577
NEW WINE DUTY	518	— Sir W. Scott	576
Speech of the Chancellor of the		— Sir W. Dolben	577
Exchequer	<i>ib.</i>	— Mr. Wilberforce	<i>ib.</i>
Dog TAX	519	— Gen. Tarleton	<i>ib.</i>

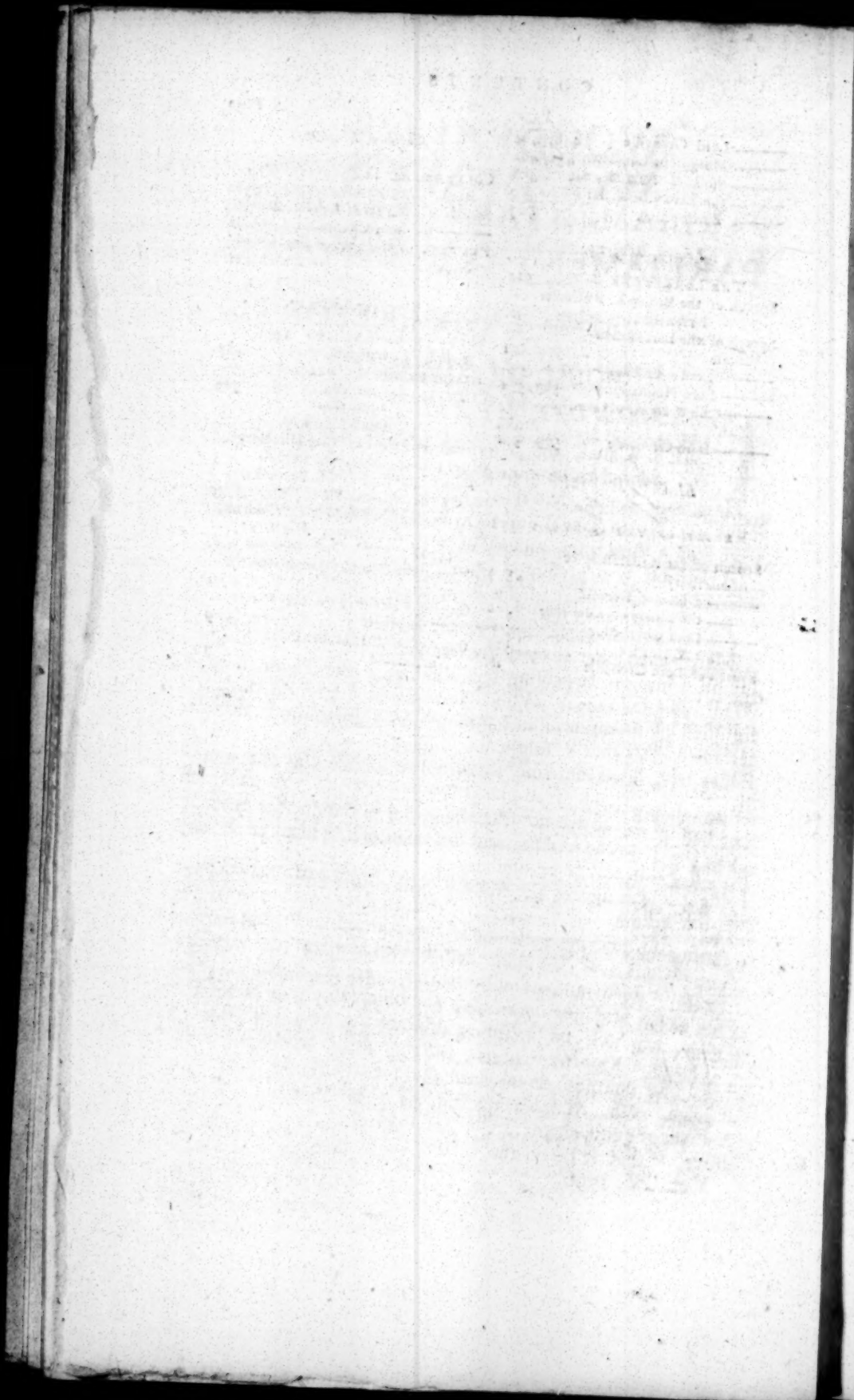
Saturday

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
<i>Saturday, May 14.</i>		<i>Thursday, April 21.</i>	
SLAVE TRADE	57	COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX	
Speech of Mr. Wilberforce	<i>ib.</i>	BILL	163
INDIA AFFAIRS	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of the Earl of Lau-	
Speech of Gen. Smith	<i>ib.</i>	derdale	<i>ib.</i> 163
— Mr. Long	578	— the Bishop of Rochester	162
RELIEF OF QUAKERS	<i>ib.</i>	— Lord Grenville	163
Speech of Mr. R. Smith	<i>ib.</i>		
— the Speaker	<i>ib.</i>	<i>Tuesday, April 26.</i>	
— Mr. Serj. Adair	<i>ib.</i>	MOTION FOR PAPERS	210
— Sir W. Scott	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of the Marquis of Lansdown	<i>ib.</i>
— the Master of the Rolls	<i>ib.</i>	DEBTOR AND CREDITOR BILL	<i>ib.</i>
— Sir R. Sutton	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of the Earl of	
		Moir	<i>ib.</i> 212, 213
<i>Wednesday, May 18.</i>		— the Lord Chancellor	211
SLAVE TRADE	582	— Lord Thurlow	216
Speech of Sir W. Dolben	<i>ib.</i>	— Lord Kenyon	217
— the Speaker	583		
— Mr. Wilberforce	<i>ib.</i>	<i>Monday May 2.</i>	
EAST INDIA COMPANY	<i>ib.</i>	CONDUCT OF ADMINISTRATION	280
Speech of Gen. Smith	<i>ib.</i>	Speech of the Marquis of	
— the Speaker	<i>ib.</i>	Lansdown	<i>ib.</i> 322, 324
— Mr. Sec. Dundas	585	— Lord Grenville	293
Account of all the Public Acts of		— the Earl of Lau-	
the Session	591	derdale	298, 321, 324, 326
		— Lord Kinnoul	306
HOUSE OF LORDS.		— Lord Auckland	305
<i>Thursday, April 7.</i>		— the Earl of Moira	313
MOTION FOR PAPERS.		— Earl Spencer	319, 321
Speech of the Earl of Lau-		— Lord Hawkesbury	<i>ib.</i>
derdale	11, 13	— the Lord Chancellor	322, 324
— Lord Grenville	12		
<i>Thursday, April 14.</i>		<i>Tuesday, May 10.</i>	
COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX		FINANCE	429
BILL	88	Speech of the Earl of	
Speech of the Earl of Lau-		Moir	<i>ib.</i> 432, 435
derdale	<i>ib.</i> 95, 96, 98	— Lord Grenville	431, 434
— Lord Sydney	88	— Lord Hawkesbury	<i>ib.</i> 436, 438
— Lord Grenville	93, 98	— the Earl of Coventry	435
— Lord Douglas [Earl of		— the Marquis of Lansdown	436
Moreton]	95, 96	— the Earl of Lauderdale	439
— the Bishop of Rochester	<i>ib.</i> 97	MOTION FOR CHANGE OF	
		SYSTEM IN REGARD TO	
		EXTERNAL POLITICS	<i>ib.</i>
		Speech of the Earl of Guild-	
		ford	<i>ib.</i> 444
		— the Earl of Carlisle	<i>ib.</i>
		— the Earl of Caernarvon	<i>ib.</i>
		— the Earl of Mulgrave	<i>ib.</i> 451
		— the Duke of Bedford	445, 464
		— Lord Hawkesbury	445, 465
		— Duke of Grafton	446
		— Earl of Mansfield	447, 450
		— Earl Fitzwilliam	447
			Lord
<i>Thursday, April 19.</i>			
COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX			
BILL	149		
Speech of the Earl of Lauderdale	<i>ib.</i>		
MOTION FOR PAPERS	<i>ib.</i>		
Speech of the Marquis of Lansdown	<i>ib.</i>		
— Lord Grenville	<i>ib.</i>		

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Lord Grenville	448, 464	<i>Tuesday, May 17.</i>	
Marquis of Lansdown	451, 462	COLLATERAL SUCCESSION TAX	
the Earl of Lauderdale	458	BILL	582
the Lord Chancellor	460	Speech of the Earl of Lauderdale	<i>ib.</i>
Earl Spencer	463	the Lord Chancellor	<i>ib.</i>
<i>Friday, May 13.</i>		PROTEST of the Earl of Lau-	
THE LONGITUDE	523	derdale	<i>ib.</i>
Speech of the Bishop of Rochester	<i>ib.</i>		
FINANCES	<i>ib.</i>	<i>Thursday, May 19.</i>	
Speech of the Earl of Lau-		SPEECH of his MAJESTY on pro-	
derdale	<i>ib.</i> 570, 571	roguing Parliament	587
Lord Auckland	552	DISSOLUTION of PARLIAMENT—	
Lord Hawkeioury	563, 571	PROCLAMATIONS	589
the Marquis of Lanf-			
down	565	APPENDIX.	
Lord Grenville	569, 571	Message of the Executive Directory	
<i>Monday, May 16.</i>		of France, <i>March 3, 1796.</i>	3
RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS	578	Note transmitted to M. Barthelemy,	
Speech of the Archbishop of		by Mr. Wickham	5
Canterbury	579	Answer transmitted to Mr. Wickham,	
Duke of Norfolk	<i>ib.</i>	by M. Barthelemy, <i>March 26,</i>	
the Bishop of Rochester	580	1796.	<i>ib.</i>
Lord Chancellor	<i>ib.</i>	Note of the Court of London on the	
Mr. Cowper	581	same	6
Speech of Lord Grenville	<i>ib.</i>	Copy of Rescript of the Emperor to	
		Baron Hugel	9
		Copy of Answer of the Palatine	
		Ambassador	7



WOODFALL'S

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, APRIL 4, 1796.

TAMER Canal, and Minfield Inclosure Bills reported, and ordered to be engrossed.

Haughton Regis, Moulden, Ridgemont, and Barrington inclosure, North Level drainage, and Egerton's estate Bills were read a third time, and passed.

A petition was presented against Barwick Inclosure, and referred to a committee on the Bill, with counsel.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS.

Mr. *Francis* gave notice, that on Monday next he would submit a motion respecting the situation of the slaves in the West India colonies. When, previous to the recess, he had signified his intention of introducing such a proposition, he entertained ideas that it might be dispensed with; no circumstance had, however, since occurred to induce him to decline it.

General *Smith* moved, that the order of the day for a motion relative to the erection and expences of barracks, of which he had given notice be discharged. This upon the question being put was agreed to, and the motion was fixed for Friday the 8th instant.

Mr. *Mainwaring* presented a petition from the cutting retail butchers, of London, Westminster, and Southwark, stating the disadvantages they labour under in consequence of impositions practised upon them by forestallers and monopolizers. By such combinations, they were precluded the benefits of fair and open markets; and obliged in consequence to make dear charges, to the hardship of the poor and people at large. Mr. *Mainwaring* said, he wished gentlemen would consider the subject maturely, and, therefore, he would then move, "that it lie on the table." On some future day he

would move that it be referred to a committee. The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

General *Smith* moved, "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to direct, that a copy of the proceedings of the late court-martial, holden on Colonel *Cawthorne*, a member of House, should be laid on the table."

The address was ordered to be prepared, and presented &c.

Mr. *Lechmere* having moved, that the order of the day for the House resolving itself into a committee on the high price of corn be discharged, and that the order be fixed for Thursday se'nnight, which was agreed to; gave notice that on that day he would submit a motion to the House on the high price of corn, and the adulteration of flour.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved, that the order of the day for the 3d reading of the legacy Bill be discharged, and the same having been agreed to, he moved a new order for its third reading the next day.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, April 5.

Tamar navigation Bill was read a third time and passed.

SHADWELL'S DIVORCE BILL.

The House resolved itself into a committee upon this Bill. Mr. *Graham*, as counsel for Mr. *Shadwell*, having stated the facts of the case, called witnesses to prove the adultery. After which the Bill went through a committee.

LEGACY BILL.

The order of the day for the third reading of the Bill being read,

Mr. *Alderman Newnham* said, some amendments had been made in this Bill, but as they were merely of a verbal nature, his objections to it remained entire. He did not think it necessary to restate all the arguments which upon a former occasion, he had taken the liberty to suggest against the Bill, because, if the general sense of the House was in favour of the Bill, he was conscious that he could not induce them to change their sentiments. He begged gentlemen, however, to consider how very oppressively the act might in some cases operate. By a succession of deaths in a family, it might so happen that the same property might be taxed five or six times in a year. In cases of officers in tropical climates, where they

they fell faster by epidemical disorders than by the sword of the enemy, the whole of their property might be swallowed up by this tax. If this bill passed, however, some people might think this the best country in the world to *live* in; it certainly would be the worst to *die* in; he should therefore give it every possible opposition.

Mr. *Rushleigh* also opposed the Bill.

General Smith declared, he found it impossible to let the Bill pass without his dissent. He did not, like other gentlemen, rise to object to any particular part of it, but to object to the principle of it and all its provisions. If such a Bill had been introduced, forty years ago, he was sure it would not have been tolerated; he begged leave to remind the House that the cyder excise act was so extremely and generally offensive, because it empowered persons acting under the commissioners of excise to enter private houses, and disclose the secrets of families, that the minister at length gave it up, and the House was afterwards obliged to repeal it; and he did not know why the commissioners of stamps should possess such an authority any more than the commissioners of excise. There were some things which ought to be held sacred, but they would be violated by this detestable tax, which was neither more nor less than the establishment of an inquisition.

Mr. *Fox* said, he did not rise to trouble the House with any further observations upon the Bill, which, if he were to make, he feared they would be ineffectual; he rose, as his honourable friend had done, to object to the whole principle of it. It was a new principle, which, if followed up, would be extremely dangerous to the interests of society. There was one observation, however, which he thought it necessary to offer. He had heard it stated, that this tax on personal property would not be just, unless a tax was levied upon landed property also. In consequence of this statement, he should move to have the present debate adjourned till it was found practicable to bring in a Bill to levy a similar tax upon landed property, because, although the principles of the two Bills were the same, he understood the provisions were different, and therefore, as the provisions of the other Bill were to differ, although it had been found practicable to raise a tax upon the descent of personal property, to raise a tax on landed property, might be found impracticable. If this position were admitted to be true, it would be partial and unfair to suffer a tax to be raised upon this Bill and not upon the other, and as the House would thereby be put under some difficulty, he moved, "That a motion be made for passing the legacy Bill, and a debate arising thereupon, that the debate be

adjourned to Tuesday the 19th instant." He appointed that day fortnight, because he supposed the other Bill was not so far advanced, as to admit of an earlier decision.

Mr. Grey seconded the motion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he agreed with the right honourable gentleman, that the principle upon which the two Bills were founded was much the same and that if this passed, it would be very desirable (if upon investigation it should appear practicable) that the principle should be extended to real property. He, however, by no means admitted, that the House being satisfied of the propriety of imposing a tax upon personal property, which had, through the medium of the present Bill, been fully discussed, should give up a productive tax because the principle could not be extended to real property. There was a material difference between these two species of property, there were many burdens upon real property from which personal property was wholly exempt; it was therefore nugatory to say one should not be taxed without the other. The principle of this Bill was not a new one, it had been established thirteen years; the means of enforcing it only were new, and the mode of extending it to other species of property; the principle of this Bill was established by the legacy-tax in 1783, and that had been found both practicable and efficient. He saw, therefore, no reason why this Bill, after having been so long before the House, and having undergone so much discussion, should be any longer delayed. The Bill for the tax upon real property would soon be introduced, and, he hoped, it would appear that its provisions were practicable: but if, upon fair investigation, it should seem impossible to extend this principle to real property, he saw no reason why the principle should be given up in this case, in which it appeared to be perfectly practicable.

Mr. Grey said, the right honourable gentleman had just argued it, as it had been argued upon a former occasion, that the present Bill was confirmed and recorded by the legacy tax of 1783. He denied, however, that it had been so sanctioned by parliament. Was there any principle more generally acknowledged, he asked, than that laid down by Adam and Smith, in his "*Wealth of Nations*," that "*Any tax on the capital of the country is an oppressive tax*?" Yet if this tax took place, it would be completely a tax upon the capital of the country, on that capital which, in the greatest and most ostensible degree, had extended the commerce of Great Britain, and increased the wealth and power of her empire. The legacy-tax was an acknowledged departure from the principle

principle of taxing the capital of the country, and he advised the right honourable gentleman not to do the contrary now, but at least to entertain some prudent regard for the political and moral axiom he had just repeated. He contended that the right honourable gentleman was not authorized by the legacy-tax to levy a tax of such a nature; the legacy tax left the capital unburdened, whereas, by the present Bill, the tax would be levied upon the capital alone. He stated, for instance, the case of a commercial house, where, according to the legacy-tax, the taxes were paid out of the particular legacies at the discretion of the testator, and did not touch the capital left in the hands of a residuary legatee to carry on the trade; by the tax under consideration that capital would always be diminished by falling on the residuary legatee, which no principle could warrant. This might be productive, therefore, of much evil. The Bill was also liable to another objection, for although equal taxes were levied upon equal property to make them as equal and impartial as possible, it might so happen that the taxes on one species of property may be unequal to the other on account of their being paid oftener. He saw no principle why the immediate heir should not be compelled to pay the tax as well as more remote successors; the right honourable gentleman had called it a tax on strangers, it was, however, in fact, a tax upon the capital, and therefore a tax upon all inheritors.

The House divided.

<i>Ayes (for the Bill)</i>	94
<i>Noes</i>	16
<i>Majority</i>	78

The Bill was then read a third time, and passed *.

DOGS.

A petition from the mayor and aldermen of the city of Worcester was presented for a tax on dogs, which was ordered to be referred to the committee.

The House then resolved itself into a committee to take into consideration the Leicester and Worcester petitions for a tax upon dogs, Mr. Hobart in the chair.

Mr. *Dent* rose to state his own reasons, and the opinions of other people concerning the motion of which he formerly had given notice for a tax on dogs. The object with which he

* For a copy of this Bill, as sent up to the House of Lords from the House of Commons, *vide* Appendix to this volume.

brought forward this motion was, he said, to produce a considerable revenue to government, and, at the same time, in an essential degree, to relieve the distresses of the industrious poor, an object of great importance at this period of scarcity. If it should be found possible to adopt the tax, it would possess one advantage, which no other tax ever did, viz. that it would not only meet with the approbation of the people, but that they were desirous of having it imposed.

He mentioned a recent pamphlet upon the hydrophobia; a number of letters which he had received to shew that such a tax was not only desirable but necessary on account of the destruction of sheep by dogs; and last, their great consumption of provisions. Since 1755 a number of petitions had been presented to that House, praying some interference to prevent the vast increase of dogs, which had become objects of daily annoyance and serious alarm. He calculated the population of the country at ten millions of people, and allowing five persons to every family, at two millions of families. Allowing therefore one dog to every family, which he thought a moderate computation, there were two millions of dogs in this kingdom. The tax which he intended to suggest would probably cause such an annihilation as to reduce that number to one million, and the tax which he should propose would be annually half a crown on every dog without discrimination, except those which serve as guides to blind men; it would, therefore, on the calculation he had stated produce a revenue of 125,000*l.* a-year.

He referred the House to the Manchester Philosophical transactions, in the second part of the 4th volume of which 15,000 animals were reckoned to be annually destroyed, and he believed he should not exaggerate if he reckoned them at 50,000. Fifty-one sheep, worth 50 guineas, have been worried and killed by a dog in Lancashire in one night. A clergyman in Devonshire had transmitted him a letter, which gave him an account of a dog that had worried upwards of 400 sheep, and though 200 men, with every species of dogs, had afterwards set out in search of him, they had not found him yet (*a laugh*). It was stated in evidence upon a trial before Lord Chief Justice Hale, that a dog had been watched, and was seen to kill two sheep, and afterwards he went into a pond and washed himself (*a louder laugh*). These people stated this fact to the owner of the dog, who disbelieved them, because the dog was free from blood, but upon their solicitation the dog was hung up the heels and he voided a considerable

ble quantity, by which means he was found guilty of the accusation. The dogs of poor people were not the only dogs that were guilty of this kind of plunder and devastation, for, however he valued his right honourable friend, he was obliged to state that gentlemen's dogs were equally criminal, since a dog had been observed to do the same in the neighbourhood of Holwood, and when some persons caught him and perused his collar, they found inscribed upon it "*Right Honorable*—," he left the Committee to fill up the blanks. (*A very loud laugh*). The dog however was pardoned out of respect to his master. (*Another peal of laughter*.) With regard to the danger arising from the multiplicity of dogs, he had to inform the Committee that thirty-three people applied to the Manchester Infirmary in one week with the hydrophobia. So far he called on the humanity of the House to adopt his motion, and he trusted that they would be the more inclined to do it, when he informed them that allowing a penny per day for the food of one million of dogs, it amounted annually to 3,000,000*l.* which was 700,000*l.* more than than all the rates for the aged poor of the country, and yet no dog he thought could be kept for less than a penny per day. By a letter from a gentleman at Kingston upon Thames he learned that sheep's heads, sheep's hearts, and plucks, &c. were bought up as offal in that vicinity to feed dogs, although the poor were glad to purchase such provisions, and from his inquiries at twenty different markets he learned that in London, people did the same. He said he was credibly informed that a sheep's head with the heart and pluck, &c. would subsist a man and his wife, and a couple of children two days. One gentleman he had heard of, who had contracted with his mealman to supply his kennel with wheat and barley flour, oats and meal at 800*l.* per annum. This might be exaggerated, but he knew a gentleman who expended 400*l.* per annum, on the same articles for his dogs. A pack of fox-hounds could not be kept for less than 1000*l.* 1500*l.* or 2000*l.* per year, and it was an absolute fact, that after a long chase, a gentleman rode into a country town with his fox-hounds clamouring with hunger, and every baker's shop in the town was ransacked for bread to satisfy them. Under all these circumstances therefore he hoped that the resolutions which he meant to propose to the Committee would not be rejected.

He then moved that a tax of half a crown a head upon each dog should be resolved on.

If that resolution passed he said, he should afterwards move for another tax upon unkennelled hounds, which often ran amongst the young corn, and moreover did a great deal of mischief.

mischiefs in the night. He mentioned some instances from the reports of the Board of Agriculture.

Colonel Stanley seconded the motion. The question being put, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a duty of two shillings and sixpence per annum be imposed on dogs of every description."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he did not think there was any thing unreasonable or improper in laying some tax on dogs, and therefore he did not expect to hear much said against it. The Committee, however, he had no doubt, would feel it necessary to draw a line of distinction in this case. They would feel for the owners of some dogs, particularly poor persons. It was clear that the poor should not keep a great number of dogs; there were many indigent persons nevertheless to whom dogs were useful, and to whose children and family they might afford some rational amusement. Such ought to be distinguished from the opulent; otherwise the tax would justly be deemed somewhat harsh. The tax itself he thought a just one. He thought also that the best mode of laying on the duty would be to charge it a certain sum for each dog *per annum* on those who kept them, and he submitted to the Committee whether there should not be a difference in the charge on those, who pay assessed taxes and the poor cottager. He did not say that if dogs be taxed, that any persons should be allowed to keep dogs without paying for them, but he wished to make a distinction between the man in easy circumstances and the poor man. That distinction he should propose thus: Three shillings per annum for each dog that shall be kept by a person, who pays any assessed taxes, and only one shilling for each dog kept by all those who do not pay assessed taxes. He saw no reason why this tax should be considered as entirely a parochial tax. Neither did he see why it should not, like other taxes, be appropriated for the service of the State. The shilling tax indeed might be well applied entirely to parochial purposes, because it was to be paid by those who are excused certain rates by the parish, and on that account more easily collected under a parochial regulation, but the remaining two thirds of the duty he should propose to be brought forward for public purposes. These distinctions might all of them be canvassed when the Bill should be brought before a Committee of the whole House, but he thought it reasonable to make them now, because the subject might thereby be better understood than if he had made no distinction until the Bill came to be discussed in a Committee. He should therefore propose an amendment to the present resolution. -- That instead of a duty of

of a duty of two shillings and sixpence, there be a duty of three shillings on each dog, meaning afterwards to propose in a Committee on the Bill, that all persons who do not pay assessed taxes shall be charged only the duty of one shilling for each dog.

Mr. Harrison said, he approved of the original resolution, and condemned the amendment: He thought it was extremely wrong that a man who fed a dog should be entitled to the poor's rate. It was absolutely maintaining him for feeding his dog. As to the plan of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he conceived it to be no more than a new mode of laying an additional tax on assessed houses.

Mr. Buxton declared he thought the proposed tax a good one, but considering it more as a regulation of police than any thing else, and that it was to prevent a continuance of that mischief from too great a number of dogs, much of which had been already felt, he could not assent to the distinction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He saw no reason why the dogs kept by the poor should be distinguished from others. If a poor man kept a dog and received relief from the parish, the parish supported his dog as well as as himself. Neither did he see any good reason why a poor man should keep a dog; he saw many against it. Considering this measure, therefore, as a regulation of police, and a good one, he was ready to support it, but the minister's distinction he could not support.

Mr. Wilberforce said, he liked the plan of the honourable gentleman who brought forward the measure, better than that of his right honourable friend (*Mr. Pitt.*) He thought that the humanity extended to the poor by the latter, was, in this case, mistaken and misapplied. The true spirit of the tax was not to take from the purse of the poor, but to prevent those, who were not perfectly able to bear the waste and expence, from keeping dogs. He had been long an enemy to a tax on dogs; but he had lately taken some pains to inquire into the business, and he was persuaded, that, though the hydrophobia did not so often, as was generally supposed, proceed from the bite of mad dogs, yet it was so often the case, that every thing should be done that had a tendency to abridge the excessive number of those animals. It was in doing this, humanity would be best shewn to the poor; for experience had proved, that the sufferings from canine madness were almost exclusively confined to the poor. The higher orders very seldom suffered in that way.

Mr. Lechmere said he had long thought that a measure of the sort of consideration was wanted in this country. He trusted that it would be of service to the public at large, and

particularly to the poor at this time, who felt extreme hardships on account of the great scarcity of provisions. Not only meat, but other provisions were consumed by these animals, some of which were entirely useless; some also were not only useful, but necessary, and they should be taxed at the lowest rate possible, such, for instance, as belonged to the labouring man. With respect to gentlemen who kept a set of fox hounds, they ought in his opinion to be compelled to pay high for them in proportion to their number. He thought also that terriers, pointers, setters and all other dogs which are used for pleasure—but he was going to say that for which he should be execrated by some part of the fashionable world—that should not however deter him; therefore he would say, that ladies lap-dogs were those of all the dogs in this country that he wished to be taxed highest; they ate the meat of a whole family in a day. It was shameful to see the manner in which they were treated; to see an athletic fellow six feet high in a gaudy livery with a couple of lap-dogs under his arms, walking after a lady through Hyde or St. James's Park for a whole morning, and following her home with such worthless animals to be fed upon the luxury of a table, was a disgrace to this country under its present circumstances. If, therefore, any measure should be brought forward to tax these animals highly above all other dogs, it should have his support.

Sir Gregory Page Turner said, if ever a tax was popular, this he believed would be so; and he felt great satisfaction that he had been among those who first suggested it. He mentioned several instances to shew that dogs, multiplied as they now are, were a great nuisance: they not only killed sheep, but disturbed public worship: and there were many in the House who must recollect an instance of a dog's breaking in on the gravity of that House with a most indecorous yell, just at the moment a late noble lord (lord North) was opening the budget; one called out to know what member had interrupted the order of the house, when the noble lord, with his accustomed quickness and good humour, answered, it was the member for *Bark-shire*.

Captain Berkeley declared for one, he approved of the proposed tax.

Mr. Dent acquiesced in the amendment proposed by the minister.

The resolution originally moved was then put and negatived.

The amendment, "That it is the opinion of this Committee that a duty not exceeding 3s. *per annum* shall be imposed on each dog, &c." was put and carried.

General Smith moved that there be laid before the House an account

account of all the corn and flour imported into this kingdom in March last, intitled to receive bounties on importation, specifying the quantities and the names of the ports into which they were imported. Ordered.

Mr. *Douglas* moved the order of the day for the farther consideration of the report of the Bill for regulating the discussion of controverted elections, which being read the Bill was re-committed; and the report was ordered to be received on Friday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, *April 6.*

The *Lord Chamberlain* (Marquis of Salisbury) reported to the House that directions had been given for laying before the House the papers moved for by the Marquis of Lansdown.

The several Bills on the Table were read in their different stages.

The consideration of Christie's Divorce Bill was postponed, on account of incorrectness in the affidavit.

Counsel were heard on Jones's Divorce Bill, and ordered to proceed.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *April 6.*

At four o'clock the Speaker counted the House, and there being only thirty-four members present, the House adjourned till to-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, *April 7.*

Received several Bills from the Commons.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* said, he rose on behalf of a noble friend (the Marquis of Lansdown) who had named that day, as the day on which he would submit a motion to their lordships' consideration. The papers necessary for that purpose, were not yet laid upon their lordships table, and when they were, it would be necessary that their lordships should have sufficient time to peruse and examine them. His noble friend was prepared to bring forward a motion of the greatest consequence to the country, at that moment. He thought however that it would not be so well to name any day, at present, as to wait until the papers were on the table, when his lordship would better be able to fix upon one that might suit the convenience of the House. One part of his friend's motion, he begged leave to amend, by submitting another in its room—it related to the production of certain papers, which, upon inquiry, it was found, would take the officers considerable time, before they

would be able to make them out. He begged leave therefore to move, instead, for an address, for the account of the exports and imports to the colonies, for the years 1792, 93, 94, 95, to be laid before the House, distinguishing each year and the particular colony. The motion was accordingly put and agreed to.

The Earl of Lauderdale stated, that he had another motion, to which he could not have supposed there would have been any denial. It was for copies of the contracts with the East India ship owners in the months of September and October 1795, for transports, for the purpose of the West India expedition. He conceived the production of this paper would be necessary in the consideration of his honourable friend's motion; at least, it would be necessary for him, in the support which he intended to give that motion. It would shew that enormous and extravagant as the taxes, and burthened as the people were, and extraordinary as the mode of borrowing and applying money was, those contracts were the most extravagant and unparallelled in any war, more so than those even during the American war. His lordship mentioned the erection of a new Transport Board, and commented with some asperity on that institution. He said he had some how or another understood his motion was to be refused; he believed it was not common to refuse the copy of a contract when asked for; nay he would speak largely, that was, he believed the first time that such a motion ever had been refused. He stated the importance of the motion to be brought forward by his noble friend, and said it would serve to shew their lordships how grossly the public money was squandered in the most improvident manner, without any thing like efficient service in return.

Lord Grenville said, had it happened that the noble Earl had given him any intimation of the motion, so that he might have informed himself respecting it, he would have looked into the paper to have seen whether a contract on the subject of a military expedition still depending, might not on the face of it contain some intelligence extremely dangerous and extremely improper to be made publick. At the same time he could conceive that such a contract might be every way proper to be communicated. If it only contained matter of public expence, and that was was required to be produced before Parliament, he would be the last man to object to its production. Whether the paper asked for fell under the description that he had just stated, or the preceding one, whether its production would be innocent or hurtful, he was not prepared to say

say. With regard to the sort of anticipation of debate, which the noble Earl had gone into respecting the Transport Board, and other matters, he would only say, that he relied with confidence on the candour and patience of their lordships to wait till the debate should come, and then he trusted they would decide how far the assertions relied on now, were founded by the facts and assertions they should hear from him in answer to them, or how far they were supported by the facts and arguments they should hear from noble lords on the other side.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* in reply said, the noble lord had in some sort relieved his anxiety as to his not being able to conjecture what could be the ground on which the papers could be denied. He now found that the noble lord conceived what he had not thought about, viz. that a contract might contain a state secret on the face of it, highly dangerous to be made known to that House, although it must necessarily be communicated and made known to sixteen persons. He maintained that the contract could contain no state secret, or it was very ill done to trust it to the ship owners; and as each ship had sixteen, it would very soon be diffused pretty widely. His lordship said he had not done the noble lord or the Board who acted under him, or any of his Majesty's ministers so much discredit as to imagine that such a reason could have operated a denial of the paper, nor did he believe it had entered into the imagination of any one of their lordships to have conjectured such a reason. It was a degree of folly which he should never have thought of charging upon ministers, but they brought it upon themselves. The noble lord would do him the justice to admit that he had not been defective in usually communicating to him every motion that he brought forward of a political nature. But as the noble lord wished to have made himself master of the subject, so as to examine the contract and see whether the matter of it contained any thing improper to be communicated to the public, he must suspend his motion; in the mean time he must say, that he doubted not, if the enquiry came before such an assembly as would be swayed only by argument and fact, such an assembly as he could depend upon for their independence, and for being under no influence but that which proved assertion and fair reasoning must excite, the question of his noble friend must be carried; the publick however would hear and learn what those assertions and what the nature of the arguments were, and they would judge for themselves on both. For his own part he had as high an opinion of the integrity of their lordships as the

the noble lord himself, and he trusted the event of that day would justify his opinion.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, April 7.

The Aberdeenshire Canal Bill was read a third time, and ordered to be carried to the Lords.

Lord Stofford communicated his Majesty's Answer to the Address of the House, for copies of the proceedings in the case of Colonel Cawthorne, informing the House that he would give directions accordingly.

A new writ was ordered for a member to serve for the borough of Boffiney, in Cornwall, in the room of Humphrey Minchin, Esq. deceased.

Mr. Pybus one of the lords of the Admiralty, communicated to the House the warrant for the arrest of Admiral Cornwallis, in order to his being tried upon certain charges, but which had not been put in execution in consequence of Admiral Cornwallis passing his word of honour to attend.

The report of the amended Corn Bounty Bill was taken into farther consideration, and agreed to with certain amendments.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, April 8.

The Bill for allowing bounties for a limited time, on the importation into Great Britain of any wheat, wheat flour, Indian corn, Indian meal or rye, in British ships, was read a third time, and passed.

Lord William Bentinck (the Duke of Portland's second son) took the oaths and his seat for Camelford.

Mr. Rider moved for leave to be given to bring in a Bill to indemnify those persons who have acted under the authority of the Privy Council, of date the 22d of November last, for admitting goods into British ports brought in neutral bottoms.

The house having resolved itself into a committee on the Dutch Property Bill, *Mr. Ryder* proposed several resolutions, and the House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

COLONEL CAWTHORNE.

Sir Charles Morgan brought up a copy of the proceedings of the court-martial upon Colonel Cawthorne, which were laid upon the table.

General

General Smith moved, that a copy of the articles of charge, together with the opinion and sentence of the court contained in these papers, should be printed. If any of Colonel Cawthorne's friends wished that the whole should be printed, he had no objection, though he conceived it would be incurring a needless expence, and an improper waste of time.

Lord Tyrconnel moved, that the whole papers should be printed.

Mr. Grey declared, he could not accede to the proposed amendment. He did not think it becoming the dignity of the House to found any measure respecting one of its members upon the opinion of a court-martial. If printing all the papers was necessary to the purposes of justice, the papers ought undoubtedly to be printed. He was afraid, however, that they were so voluminous, that printing them in a mass would tend to defeat any proceeding this session. He suggested, that a committee might be appointed to examine the papers, and to report upon the evidence to the House.

Mr. Francis said, he agreed entirely with his honourable friend, and opposed the printing of all the papers, because it could serve no good purpose, the friends of Colonel Cawthorne having it in their power to make themselves complete masters of the evidence from the manuscripts that had been laid upon the table.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, it was impossible for the House to let the subject escape their attention, and as it would be impossible for gentlemen to make up their minds upon it, without having ample materials before them, he conceived, that it was but fair that all the papers should be printed; nor did he see what reasonable objection could be made to the proposition. The printing could not he thought take up so much time, as to render it impossible for the House to take some step in the business, in the course of this session.

General Smith's motion was then put and negatived, and all the papers were ordered to be printed.

DOG TAX.

The report of the Committee on the Dog Tax was received; containing a resolution that a duty not exceeding 3s. *per annum*, be imposed on each dog of every description.

Mr. Dent said, he still wished, that this tax should be 2s. 6d. on each dog, and that it should be appropriated to the relief of the poor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might double it next year, and then apply its produce to the publick service; he therefore thought the resolution ought to be recommended.

mitted. He was also of opinion, that the tax ought not to take place till six months after the passing of the act.

The Resolution was agreed to, and a Bill ordered to be brought in.

FINANCIAL PAPERS.

Mr. Grey moved, that there be laid before the House,

An account of all monies now due for off-reckonings to the several colonels, or commanding officers, of his Majesty's regiments of regular, fencible, or militia forces; distinguishing the periods for which such off-reckonings are respectively due.

An account of all monies which remained due on the same account on the 1st of January last, and which have since been paid; with an account of the grants out of which such payments have been made.

An account of all arrears now due to the officers of the several regiments, troops, and companies, of his Majesty's regular, fencible, and militia forces, distinguishing the periods for which such arrears are respectively due; also, an account of such arrears as have been discharged since the 1st of January last, distinguishing the periods for which such arrears were due, and the grants out of which they have been so discharged.

An account of all pay, or arrears of pay, now due to the general and staff officers of his Majesty's forces, stating the periods for which the same are respectively due.

An account of all pay, or arrears of pay, which were due to the general and staff officers of his Majesty's forces on the 1st of January last, and which have since been discharged; together with an account of the grants out of which they have been so discharged.

An account of all pay, and arrears of pay, now due to the several governors, lieutenant governors, and other officers of his Majesty's forts and garrisons in Great Britain, and parts beyond the seas, stating the periods for which the same are respectively due.

An account of all pay, and arrears of pay, which were due to the several governors, lieutenant governors, and other officers of his Majesty's forts and garrisons in Great Britain, and parts beyond the seas, which were due on the 1st of January last, and which have since been discharged; together with an account of the grants out of which they have been so discharged.

An account of the Exchequer Bills issued on the vote of credit granted for the year 1796, with the expence attending the same, and distinguishing the amount issued to discharge arrears due on the 1st of December 1795.

These motions being severally put and carried; all the papers were ordered to be produced.

BARRACKS.

General Smith said, he felt no apology necessary for bringing forward the motion which he was about to submit to the House;

House; in his opinion it was not inferior in importance to any, not even to that lately proposed by his honourable friend (Mr. Grey). He meant in the first place to state the amount of the expenditure, then to compare it with the expence incurred by similar objects in past times, and next to point out the unconstitutional nature of the measure. The expence of erecting barracks was alarmingly enormous, it amounted to more than half the sum saved by Mr. Burke's Bill for the reform of the civil list. In the papers on the table, there was an account of money disbursed, to an amount considerably above a million sterling. An estimate had been given for erecting more, to the amount of 200,000*l.* and allowing 100,000*l.* for bedding and utensils not included in the estimate, the expence in all would be almost 1,400,000*l.* The expence was not all, ministers had obtained the means of considerable influence, by the patronage of the offices to which this system had given rise. There were forty-six barrack masters, a barrack master-general, and nineteen officers with salaries, amounting in all to 11,000*l.* If there were barracks, there certainly must be barrack masters; he begged to know however, why barrack masters were appointed, and enjoyed ample salaries before the barracks were built? At Lincoln this had actually been the case, before a single line was marked out, before perhaps any intention existed of making this erection. Such an application of the public money upon objects of that nature, without the consent and approbation of Parliament, the general said, was a violation of all the principles of the constitution. Why, he demanded, was the public money so applied? Was that the way our ancestors acted when they wanted money for the public service? He moved, that that part of the act, called the Civil List Reform Bill, should be read, by which it was enacted, "that no person should enjoy a salary of more than 500*l.* a-year, without an estimate being previously given and signed by the Lords of the Treasury." The conduct of ministers in going to such enormous expence in the erection of barracks, was, he contended, a gross violation of the spirit of Mr. Burke's Bill. The House of Commons was the peculiar guardian of the public purse, the money of the nation ought not therefore to be applied, whether wastefully or improvidently or not, without an estimate having been delivered in to and approved by that House. In former times, when any important measure was in meditation, an inspecting officer was appointed, who delivered in a report for parliamentary consideration. If in the present case ministers had followed this practice, and submitted to the House an estimate of the

expenditure of erecting barracks, he was convinced that it would have been thrown out, like the famous fortification estimate. Ministers, however, had first squandered the public money, and then they came forward confidently to demand the sanction of Parliament for what they had done.

His honourable friend (Mr. Grey), the general observed, had lately given a representation of the financial state of the country, which certainly had never been confused, and which he expected would have extorted some vindication of his character from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He did expect that the right honourable gentleman who had been the chief promoter of the war, would have been anxious to alleviate, as much as possible, the expenditure of that war, that he who, in common with him and the other members of the opposition of that day, used so loudly to inveigh against the extravagance of a former minister in a former war, would have been eager to account to the nation for the enormous additional expenditure incurred during his administration in the present war. Economy he had often extolled as a virtue, but where was the economy in expending 1,400,000*l.* in the erection of barracks? The expenditure, however, was a trifling object, when compared with the unconstitutionality of the measure. Good God! (he exclaimed) Was every town to be made a citadel, and every village to be converted into a garrison? Barracks were already erected, capable of containing thirty-four thousand troops, which was double the number of the usual peace establishment. From that fact one of two inferences must follow, either that ministers had betrayed the trust of the nation, in needlessly squandering the public money, by erecting barracks, for which there would be no use; or that they mean to maintain a standing army, sufficient to enable them (to borrow one of their own expressions) *to exercise a rigour beyond the law*. Was there any thing in the present state of the country to warrant such measures being adopted with such intentions? The people had lately met with a severe trial, and they had borne it with patience and fortitude. If ministers were to have the power of applying money to one purpose which was voted by Parliament for another, there was an end of the constitution. The constitution was much in people's mouths; at the beginning of the war, in particular, the right honourable gentleman had insisted, that it was the salvation of the constitution which prompted him to undertake the war. He was one of those who was friendly to the war upon that principle, and he had not altered his opinion. He wished gentlemen however would have some regard to consistency

consistency of character; and while they supported the constitution with one hand, that they would not attack it with the other. While gentlemen with a professed regard to the constitution, were so jealous for the preservation of the prerogatives of the crown, and stood up so strongly in their behalf, he begged to know what was to become of the rights of the people, and who was to be considered as their protectors? The minister of this country had done more than ever the most despotic monarch dared to do. In former times the Kings of this country had attempted to levy money without consent of Parliament; a minister of this day ventures to apply the public revenues to purposes for which it was not intended, in defiance of the law, and to expend millions upon his unauthorised schemes in violation of the rights of the Commons. The general concluded with moving, "That it be referred to a committee to inquire into the amount of the expenditure in erecting barracks, to investigate by what authority the public money has been thus applied, and to report the evidence, with their opinion, to the House."

The *Secretary at War* rose to reply. That the honourable general was struck in the first place with the magnitude of the expence was evident; that however proved but little; in every county like this the public service must necessarily be carried on at a great expence. The proper state of that question would be, not whether there was a great expence, but whether there was a comparative proportion between the magnitude of the expenditure and the importance of the object? With regard to the objection, that the money had been incurred without being submitted to the judgment of parliament; unless that became a question of mere form (and he was ready to allow that there had been a departure from form,) another question would arise, built upon the spirit and meaning of our constitution, and upon true wisdom. Was the money incurred *bona fide* for the public service, which was, from incidental circumstances, not regularly submitted to the House? or did ministers in fact mislead the public judgment? He contended that no public inconvenience arose from the mode of the expenditure, and that there was no reason to think that the public judgment had been misled. Could gentlemen pretend that the expences were incurred without the knowledge of the House? Certainly not. The question, though it had not come before the House in a regular form, had been discussed in other forms; and having the approved judgment of the House on such occasions, it could not be said to come "*sub silentio*" on the nation.

It had been brought before the House in the year 1793; and as it had then come distinctly to be considered, he had a right to plead the event of that discussion, as a virtual recognition of the principle of the measure. The House, therefore, had been substantially apprised of the measure; and with respect to any estimate or details that could be made or entered into, he contended that they would only be a compliance with mere form. The amount of the expence would have been difficult to be ascertained in any part of the expenditure.--- Much had been incurred on the spur of occasion: and, in short, if the utmost exertions had been made to lay the estimate before the House originally, it would have been a vague conjecture, as he had already said, merely to satisfy form. The honourable general had stated, that three or four years ago there were no such things as barracks. Did he indeed know so little of the matter? Was it necessary for him to state that barracks capable of containing troops to the amount of 20,000 men had been erected many years since, and were still standing, and in use. Such being incontrovertibly the fact, the principle was established. An objection, he was aware, was ready in the mouths of gentlemen, viz. "that there was the less necessity for erecting new barracks;" but there were two objections to the old barracks: First, they were calculated for the reception of infantry only; they were not made for entertaining cavalry: and secondly, they were placed in situations not fit for the commodious arrangement of troops through the kingdom; and as it had been found, in many instances, not being convenient to station soldiers in them, it had been necessary to quarter them in inns.

With respect to the practice of billeting soldiers on inn-keepers, it was an old abuse; it was a practice strange, and unknown in any other country in the world; the soldiers of the state were not provided at the expence of the state, but at the cost of a particular class of inhabitants. What better reason, he desired to know, could be stated for laying this burden upon inn-keepers than upon attornies, shopkeepers, or any other class of people? Formerly, when the practice commenced, the soldiers pay was greater, in proportion to the value of the commodities, and perhaps he might then have been able to pay for his fare as well as any other guest; but in progress of time, when there was no proportion between the pay of a soldier, and his expences at an inn, this institution became oppressive to the inn-keepers; and at last so much so, that it was found absolutely necessary to pass an act last year for their relief. If any body objected, that inn-keepers made travellers pay, the expence

was still of oppressive operation, and borne either by inn-keepers or travellers, or by both.

Another objection was, that when the troops were in motion in all parts of the country, they were obliged to follow the course of the inns in travelling with great inconvenience, especially as the number of capital inns in the country had for some time past been considerably on the decrease, which consequently made the grievance become more intolerable to those that remained. In fact, all circumstances combined to render the erecting of new barracks indispensably necessary. Having thus stated the progress and reasons of the measure, he said, the next question was, whether the expenditure had been conducted wastefully or unprofitably? On the fullest investigation into that part of the subject, he was confident that nothing would appear but economy and good management for the public interest; on that head he would at all times be ready to go into any enquiry, being thoroughly convinced that the public would be more satisfied, the more the mode of expenditure was considered. He desired the honourable general to point out any abuse, which when known or even suspected, was not instantly remedied or guarded against; every investigation, he was persuaded, would lead to the honour of the gentlemen in that department. The honourable general had talked of expences permanently entailed upon the people: he denied that the great expence was permanent; the erection of barracks made one original expence. With respect to the annual expences for barrack-masters, that was permanent; if barracks were erected, no doubt there must be persons to take care of them: so much for permanent expence. On the other hand, there was a permanent saving; and he maintained, that if the old system were to be continued, the annual expence to the public would be larger than under the establishment of barracks. He did not mean to say, that the old system would be more expensive without the additional allowance made to inn-keepers; but he must assert, that it would be considerably greater when subject to the operation of that act of relief. He was certain the barracks would be found considerably cheaper in time of war, and he believed they would also be cheaper in peace.

From the circumstance of the erection of barracks, the honourable general had thought proper to infer, that the whole war establishment was to be kept up in time of peace. He did not then wish to say what peace establishment it might be necessary to keep up; it however by no means followed, that it would be necessary to fill those barracks because they were
in

in existence; when the desired event of peace should take place, would the House act so unwisely as to reckon on the continuance of it with such an extent of credulity as to decide in that moment that it would not be necessary to stand prepared against the possibility of the return of war? Did the honourable general himself think that the country ought to be left subject to the same inconveniences as they were at the beginning of the present war, for want of quarters for new-raised troops? If, instead of the present permanent barracks, administration had been contented with temporary erections, repeated expences might be incurred, and repeated inconveniences sustained. It would be better, therefore, in different views of advantage, to submit to a large first expence for building barracks of substantial quality, even though part of them might remain empty and untenanted in time of peace. On a general principle of defence, it might be necessary to quarter troops where there were no inns; without which precaution several parts of the kingdom, such as towns upon the east of Scotland, might be liable to the depredation of any privateer that should land. These barracks were not, however, capable of maintaining an extraordinary increase above the peace establishment; the cavalry on the last peace establishment, he believed, amounted to 3700 men; the barracks erected for cavalry would contain 5400 men; and he would put it to the House, whether the surplus for the accommodation of 1700 men afforded any cause for general alarm? and at the same time that it could not alarm even the most timid, nor the most firm patriot, it would be a great convenience to have these surplus quarters on the breaking out of a war. The honourable general complained of the new patronage created by the nomination of barrack-masters; if barracks exist, there must necessarily be somebody to take care of them; there must, of course, be patronage, and that patronage must be vested somewhere. Allowing the institution to be generally good, should gentlemen from any horror of patronage give it up. The former system, he contended, had been full of waste and mismanagement; in the present, he desired gentlemen to shew a trace of either. It was to be recollected also, that the expences lately presented to the House included a part of the expences formerly placed to the account of ordnance; a part likewise went to governors of forts and garrisons; which, according to the old arrangement, was exceedingly incommodious.

With respect to what the honourable general had observed relative to an observation of an honourable gentleman (Mr. Grey) on a former night, he had paid so little regard to the circumstance

circumstance when it was uttered, that if it had not been repeated, it would have died from his memory; it was trifling in itself. A sadler, it seemed, had been appointed master of an intended barrack at Lincoln, but as the barrack had not been erected, he was dismissed. Gentlemen enjoyed their laugh, because a barrack-master was appointed before the barrack was built; was there any thing either wonderful or ridiculous in this? As gentlemen seemed eager for the enjoyment of a jest, it would be a pity to interrupt a gratification. There were, it was true, three barracks planned at Lincoln, Shrewsbury, and Saxmundham; and there were barrack-masters appointed; these erections were found not to be necessary, and were abandoned. Gentlemen however must know, that it was proper to have a superintending barrack-master to treat for the ground, and oversee the progress of erection, nobody could be a better judge; and if the intention of erecting buildings should be abandoned, and the barrack-masters dismissed, ought they not to receive a part of their salary for the time they were appointed?

In answer to what the honourable gentleman had stated respecting a compensation given to barrack-masters for losing their places, the only answer he could give was, that he had never heard of any such thing; nay, he could state further, that no such compensation had been given. So far, however, from the situation of the newly appointed barrack-masters being extremely lucrative, it was considered by many of them so much below their expectation, so low in salary and perquisites, that gentlemen were every day giving them up. The officers under the barrack-master also did not find it a place of idleness; on the contrary, they were constantly employed, had no perquisites, and were obliged to give constant attendance; considering how little temptation there was to seek the office, he considered it very fortunate that they were filled by persons of such respectability. They were commonly half-pay officers, attached by habit and inclination to the service, and he was glad that there was such a receptacle for the old and wounded officers, who had grown grey in the service of their country.

He came at length, he said, to the constitutional question, which he considered as intimately connected with the subject of the debates that took place in the beginning of the present session of parliament. That very reason (he meant the constitutional question) would have forced the House upon the present system of barracks, or upon others of a like nature. If they thought that there were men who were labouring night and

and day to preach up bad doctrines in this country, would it be unconstitutional in the government to withdraw the soldiery from being infected by them? to prevent them from bearing doctrines inculcating revolt, sedition and treason, which the law would prevent them from teaching? Some persons were such advocates for free discussion, that they had no objection to allow any doctrine to be taught, trusting only to the antidote which argument could bestow, but to their mode of reasoning he could not surrender his own judgment. The law certainly did not say that it would be improper to prevent the soldiery from imbibing such principles, neither did the constitution say so. If therefore there were such men abroad, he would adopt the method of cure prescribed in a French comedy—"If I cannot make you dumb, I will make you deaf." Upon that principle the removal of the troops from the danger of being tampered with had proceeded. He was desirous that the soldiers should be considered as citizens; and in order that they might be so considered, he would withdraw them from bad lessons and dangerous counsel; he would, in that case, act by them as he would act with his own family, his own children. Putting the poisonous infusion of sedition however out of the question, the good discipline of the army made the measure advisable: the institution of barracks would tend to the comfort as well as to the obedience of the soldiers. In public-houses they were under a continual temptation to contract expences which they could not support, and vicious habits which could neither benefit themselves nor the community: this they must either do or live in miserable dependence upon the bounty of the innkeeper. Living in a public-house was therefore morally and politically exceptionable.

After urging many further objections to quartering soldiers on inn-keepers, the Secretary at War came next to answer many observations made by the honourable general, respecting an expression which he had used early in the session, that, in certain circumstances, it would be justifiable as it might be necessary to have recourse to a *vigour beyond the law*. The expression he had certainly used; and when he recollected the circumstance in which he stood when he employed it, he saw no reason to shrink from the sentiment which it conveyed. It was on a memorable occasion that the expression fell from him, when it was affirmed that the duty of allegiance had ceased, and that resistance to government was no longer a question of duty, but of prudence. That struck him to be an unqualified recommendation of direct civil resistance; and seemed to threaten a dissolution of the government. In that situation

situation he said, that government must exercise a vigour beyond the law; and, in doing so, he said no more than what was conveyed in the maxim, *Silent leges inter arma*—when it is impossible to preserve the forms of law, because the opposite party appeals to another decision.

When a rebellion existed in the country in the year 1745, was not that done which was beyond the vigour of the law? The government under such circumstances is obliged to have execution in the field. There was nothing unjustifiable therefore in the expression, as applicable to a case of the nature in question. The government was then driven into a situation in which it was a question of arms only, and not a question of law or constitution. Having touched upon that topic, he could not help advert to the observations of another honourable gentleman, whom he wished present. That honourable gentleman had thought proper to deliver an opinion, and express a hope, "that the army entertained too just a sense of their duty as citizens, to carry the bills then in agitation into effect." This was, in his opinion, a doctrine most dangerous, mischievous, and wicked, and he was sorry to hear it broached in an assembly of such high authority. He knew of no such duty in the soldiery, and he could not let the doctrine pass without reprehension. The duty of soldiers was to uphold the government of the country, and to act with as much energy, under a strong impulse of duty, in opposing those within the kingdom who would traitorously and wickedly overturn the existing government of the country, as against any foreign enemy. Such would be their duty on such an occasion. Did not the soldiers act with as much energy in 1745, against their rebellious countrymen, as against the foreign foe?—and had not the rebels then as many excuses for their conduct as they would have had lately? In the year 1715 did they not act in the same manner? If the soldiers had refused to quell the mobs in 1780, what would have been the consequence? The city of London would have been in ashes. During the riots in Birmingham, if the soldiers had not acted with vigour and effect, the most dangerous and dreadful consequences might have resulted.

After further pointing out and enforcing the necessity of obedience to government, the Secretary at War said, that if such a dreadful case should arise as he had mentioned, when inflammatory and seditious persons should oppose the government by force, it would be necessary to step beyond the vigour of the law. No general rule of law could apply to such a case; it would make a law for itself; but so long as the con-

stitution should exist, while the King, Lords, and Commons should exist, it was the proud and sacred duty of the soldier to stand up in defence of law and the constitution, and to oppose any rebel or democratic traitor who should resist the authority of government. Such was the duty of a soldier; and the man who maintained the contrary, maintained a doctrine as remote from the law and the constitution, as it was from the feelings of this country: and if he had not been sure that the occasion did not admit of the animadversion, it might have become a question whether the individual who had maintained such a doctrine should not be proceeded against as a traitor. Having stated so much on the general question, and in vindication of his former assertions; and also declaring that he had no hesitation in saying, that the soldiery could never be so dangerous an engine in the hands of the crown, as when made the supporters of rebellion, and the instruments of the fury of misguided republicanism, the honourable Secretary concluded, by giving a direct negative upon the honourable general's motion.

Mr. M. A. Taylor said, whenever a constitutional question was brought forward in that House, and supported by his friends, it was the constant and uniform practice of gentlemen on the other side to endeavour to render it perfectly nugatory, so that henceforward all the precepts and opinions of their ancestors might be dispised and rejected, and every constitutional authority in their libraries be committed to the flames. The right honourable gentleman had found that there were but two alternatives to avoid the object of his honourable friend's motion, and he had very artfully chosen that which was best adapted to his present situation. He had concluded his speech with a string of truisms to which every gentleman in the House must subscribe, and consistently with the usual fertility of his imagination, had created a number of phantoms, every one of which militated against his own arguments. The right honourable gentleman in the flourish of his peroration had pompously pronounced, that if the people rebelled against their King or the lawful government of the country, in such case the troops were justifiable in acting against their fellow citizens. Was there any man doubted the fact? Was there any man who would not subscribe to it as freely as the honourable gentleman; why therefore then dwell upon it with such apparent warmth, if it were not to divert the mind of the House from the real and just object of the honourable general's motion?

The

The right honourable gentleman next asserted, that the principle of cantoning the military of this country in barracks, was not a new principle, as it had been recognized by parliament. Where had the honourable gentleman learned this doctrine; he did not formerly profess it? He could tell the House where. He had learned it since he kept company with those men whose interest perverted every honest resolution, and established sophisticated sentiments. He was sorry that right honourable gentleman had been drawn into that delusive vortex, and he lived to lament his fall. There was a time, however, when he had heard him lay down opinions conformable to the maxims of ages, opinions which almost flashed conviction upon every hearer. He had now, however, done that which even his right honourable friend had prudently avoided; when he brought forward a motion of similar tendency, three years ago, his right honourable friend did not presume to give it his decisive negative; but cautiously got rid of it by moving the order of the day. The right honourable gentleman had endeavoured to sanction the present extensive practice of erecting barracks, by saying that he thought gentlemen had approved of the principle, when barracks were erected on the eastern coast of Scotland. Did not the honourable gentlemen recollect that Fort Augustus was erected from necessity, not principle, because there were no inns nor cantonments for soldiers to be quartered in, and because it was absolutely necessary to protect that coast from the descent and depredations of hostile privateers. The right honourable gentleman had gone farther, he had even asserted that parliament had always recognized the principle. He called upon him to shew him one instance of parliamentary recognition. Had one question ever been brought forward to convince the House that a change of times, of manners, and opinions, rendered a change of principles expedient? Was there one solitary application to parliament, one weak attempt, to shew them that of two evils, and undoubtedly the building of barracks was an evil, as he would argue by and by, they ought to chuse the least? No, not one, and he desired him to produce it. He did not indeed attempt to prove it, but content himself with childish arguments. So far from parliament having recognized the principle of building barracks, they were first clandestinely erected, and he believed that as he was the only person in that House who had a residence near Sheffield, where they began to be so clandestinely erected. He was the first person who took any notice of them, and brought on a discussion about them. When he

enquired at Sheffield about the mode in which they were to be paid for, and whether the charges were to come into the estimates, he was informed that it was so expected. Upon this information he examined the estimates and found an article for building barracks at Sheffield; if that circumstance had not occurred, who would have thought of looking into the estimates for such a charge? He believed also that the practice of building barracks had extended without the consent of parliament, and that the sum charged for barrack masters and other persons concerned in them, was enormous, compared with the nature of their duty.

The right honourable gentleman had more than insinuated that he imagined persons of a seditious and traitorous description were employed to seduce the army from their duty and allegiance. If the fact really were so, he supposed that they might easily be found out. If such seditious persons there were, why were they not brought forward? It had been stated that papers of an inflammatory nature were thrown into the soldiers quarters to corrupt them, and he begged to be informed whether papers of a similar nature might not also be thrown into barracks? If any seditious people did go into public houses to incite the soldiers to mutiny, they were liable to heavy penalties, and surely the right honourable gentleman would not pretend to say that government had not the power of indicting and punishing them? Where were their spies at this critical juncture? Probably ministers had by this time been sufficiently convinced that spies were of little or no use they were therefore cautious how they grounded an accusation upon their authority. Barracks, however, were to be their only safeguard. Did soldiers then never go out when they are cantoned in barracks? Were they always kept under lock and key? Always fastened to a chain and guided by their leaders? Did they never live with their families, never mingle with the world as citizens, and share alike the blessings and contagion of society? He hoped not so. Automation troops of such discipline might do for drill, but the best support of government, and the bravest defenders of the rights, liberties, religion, and property of the kingdom, were those men who have an interest in all, and partake of the comforts they afford. Having formerly stated his opinions upon the advantages and expediency of preserving the character of the citizen and the soldier inseparable, he declined going over the same grounds again, but if the minister, ten or twenty years ago, he alluded to the noble lord who unfortunately engaged in the American War, and for whose memory he entertained

call due respect; (Lord North) if that noble lord, at the commencement of that unhappy war, had thought of introducing such a system, and a system the practice of building barracks might be called, he would have been loudly censured by the whole nation; if he had thought of introducing such a system at the close of that unhappy war, when he was attacked by the right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Pitt) for his prodigality and weakness in the conduct of it, he was sure that the right honourable gentleman would have been foremost in censure, and one of its most strenuous opposers. Time however, altered mens sentiments, of which the right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Windham) was a melancholy instance. When he blamed others for denying the practice of building barracks to be established upon principle, did he recollect that he had never himself held the same language? When he threw obloquy upon their arguments, did he think the influence of the crown had decreased, and that to keep the constitutional balance in equilibrium, it was expedient to do so? If such were his misconceptions, it was fit that he should be set right. It was fit he should be informed that the influence of government had increased to an alarming degree, and was increased too by his coalition and that of his associates, by the number of places which were obliged to be provided for them, among which the patronage of barracks was by no means an unimportant consideration. Was no part of this patronage exercised with a view to a general election? He believed it was. It was impossible not to perceive the growth and extent of this influence and patronage. Advertisements of new offices daily stared him in the face, and the formation of the transport office of yesterday was followed up by the creation of the barrack office of to-day. Where this would end God only knew. Each day the excessive burdens which the establishment of these new offices occasions, with all the load of barrack masters and dependants, become more galling and oppressive to the people, and therefore, when gentlemen talked of sedition and disloyalty, they ought to prove their assertions, he defied them to give any proof, for all the proof that could be given was on his side of the question, which proved that the people were more than ordinarily loyal and obedient, or they would not bear the burdens which a war carried on in so scandalous, so shameful, and so wanton a manner had produced. They must, indeed, be loyal in the extreme, to suffer two millions of money to be expended for barracks without the consent and recognition of parliament.

The

The Right honourable gentlemen had declared that there were no barrack masters appointed for whom he could not answer, that he was extremely happy that an opportunity was offered to him to provide for men whose services entitled them to some remuneration from their country, and that all who were appointed were qualified for the appointment, and would discharge the trust and duty reposed in them with fidelity and honour. He did not attempt to follow the right honourable gentleman throughout the whole of his high-flown panegyric, but he feared that some of these worthy men would be expected to shew their influence some way not connected with the business of that appointment, or the management of barracks. He should like to know if that were true. He had read an account in a printed report of a speech of his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) of the appointment of a barrack master at Lincoln, where no barracks were erected, to whom a compensation was afterwards made. He knew that Lincoln sent members to parliament, and he accordingly made some enquiry about this barrack master. He was informed that he was a very good kind of man, a saddler by trade, a good sportsman, a dancing-master, and a master of the ceremonies to the Lincoln assembly. He wished therefore to be informed what sort of connection there was between a dancing-master and a barrack-master, and of what service a saddler could be to a regiment where there were no horses. He had, however, he believed, obtained a true account of the real qualifications of this barrack master. He was a good electioneering man, and had formerly been a serviceable agent to a family of his acquaintance. That family had since fallen a little into decay, and as the dancing-master shrewdly imagined, he should be better paid if he espoused the interests of the other party, he crossed hands, changed partners, and footed on the other side with Lord Hobart and Colonel Cawthorne. And this he believed was the true cause of his appointment.

Why, however, were barrack-masters appointed before the barracks were erected? The right honourable gentleman said that barrack-masters served to point out the lines and measure the places. This was the first time that he had ever understood the business of a dancing-master and surveyor, and a barrack-master and an engineer, to be synonymous; and least the country might suspect itself to be duped in this instance, he should like to have it explained. The right honourable gentleman moreover contended, that if the principle was not admitted, in the first instance, it had been found so expedient, so politic and useful, that it ought to be admitted. If it really was so good that it ought to be recognized, why

was

was not a regular motion made for that purpose? But allowing all this, what had it to do with the motion of his honourable friend? his motion regarded not the expediency, the policy, nor the utility of the barracks themselves; it related solely to the expenditure of the sums of money demanded for them, and the mode of that expenditure. Then why was not this motion granted? The reason was plain and evident. Ministers do not like inquiries, because unpleasant things are apt to come out which do not redound to their honour. All inquiries were therefore unfortunate, while an administration is making every thing suitable to elections and the retention of their places. He cautioned them, however, against the treatment of constitutional questions in such a way. They ought to be fairly met and openly discussed. Our ancestors were, he observed particularly careful to guard against the erection of inland fortresses and barracks; if they were so jealous in such cases, he saw no reason why we should not be so likewise, unless the right honourable gentleman could prove the present period was wiser than former times, and the present administration wiser than every constitutional authority that went before it. The fact was, there had neither been opposition nor administration in any former period that did not reprobate the building of barracks as dangerous and unconstitutional. He relied upon the wisdom and superior talents of the House, and could not see why he should not give his hearty assent to the motion.

The Secretary at War rose to explain, and said he saw no inconsistency in what he before stated, as a soldier might be very well qualified to superintend the building of barracks, but he had merely dismissed, not appointed the barrack master of Lincoln.

Mr. Fox addressed the Speaker in substance as follows:—
“I am happy that the right honourable gentleman opposite to me, as being particularly connected with the department to which belongs the cognizance of that which is the object of this evening's discussion, has thought proper to come forward in so full and explicit a manner; I am, at the same time, proud to confess, that I differ with him upon almost every point which he has advanced, and have no hesitation to declare, in what that difference consists, though I do not intend to go at length into the consideration of all of them. He has, however, alluded to one general principle that particularly claims my attention; and in doing so has noticed an expression of mine made use of on a former occasion, when I advanced a general principle, which I always have entertained, and ever will entertain, a principle which he himself formerly espoused

espoused, and which I believe to be espoused by almost all those with whom I have the honour of acting. I mean the general principle of resistance; the right inherent in free men to resist arbitrary power, whatever shape it may assume, whether it be exerted by an individual, by a senate, or by a king and Parliament united. This I proclaim as my opinion; in the support of this principle I will live and die. The discussion of this principle is not necessarily involved in the present question; I shall therefore content myself for the present, with thus again fairly stating it. The right honourable gentleman has also brought forward another general question, more closely connected with the subject of debate, but the same time not altogether necessary in its decision: I speak of the connection which ought to subsist between the military and the rest of their countrymen. Upon this point I am indeed proud to differ with the right honourable gentleman. Because, says he, there are bad men and bad principles abroad in the country, the military must be secluded from the society of their fellow-subjects. He then most aptly introduces the language of the mock-doctor, and says, "If I cannot make others dumb, I can make them deaf." I will place them entirely out of reach, where no such doctrine shall assail their ears. What is the full meaning and extent of this doctrine? Can the right honourable gentleman make his troops partially deaf? can he prevent them from listening to the voice of sedition, without, at the same time, shutting them from the knowledge of those general principles of rational liberty, whose animating influence, I say, ought to enspire the soldiers of a free country? They ought not, says he, to be taught disobedience. God forbid that they should; but is it not a plain proposition that indiscriminate obedience is not the duty of an Englishman, whether he be a soldier or any other citizen? Where commands are illegal, it is his duty to resist them. The right honourable gentleman, surely, does not intend to say, that his troops should be altogether deaf:—if he does, it will be in vain for him to look for an army in this country, possessed of this physical advantage: he must call in foreign aid; he must at once introduce into the bosom of our island, an army of foreign mercenaries. Ignorant of any language but their own, they would be sufficiently deaf for all the purposes of despotism. It would be enough that they should understand their officers, and might easily be brought, as in former times, to act against this House and the general liberties of the country.

"Exclu-

“ Exclusively of what I have already urged, I differ in this question, upon the point of prudence and policy. If one system be more corrupt and inimical to freedom than another, it is the system of barracks. What was actually the case in France? Was not the mode in which their army was cantoned out in barracks a principal operative cause in producing the revolution? It is beyond all belief astonishing, that while we declaim so violently upon the state to which France has been reduced, we at the same time are pursuing the very measures which are likely to bring us every day nearer to a similar situation. The honourable gentleman speaks of those who preach up doctrines hostile to the constitution, but permit me to say, it is not Mr. Paine, nor much more ingenious men than he, who, by any thing they say, can injure the constitution. Those are its real enemies who are constantly making practical comments upon such authors. Those who with me admire our constitution, are of opinion, that the constitution, if strictly adhered to, has sufficient energy to defend and preserve itself. Paine says that our constitution is a mere farce, a mockery: that there is no real check upon the exercise of the powers of government. Do not ministers practically say the same? Do they not, year after year, day after day, pass acts in direct violation of the acknowledged principles of the constitution? Their manifest breach of the appropriation act, as lately proved, must be fresh in our recollection. These deviations they pretend to justify on the plea of necessity. If this plea is at any time to be received with jealousy, it must be in the present instance, and it is indeed curious to observe the language by which this measure is attempted to be defended. In the mode of granting the money, says the honourable gentleman, there may possibly have occurred some deviation from strict form, but nothing has been done substantially prejudicial. What, is it from him such language was to be expected? From him who has a sanctified horror at every thing which bears the semblance of reform? From him who on the subject of a reform in the representation, trembled at the bare idea of taking one step towards innovation? Is he the person who comes forward and tell us that forms may be dispensed with?

“ But let us see what is actually the form, as it is called, which we are desired thus to dispense with. Are we not rather desired to dispense with a fundamental principle of the constitution? Are we not desired to dispense with the exercise of that control which we ought to have over the public purse, and called upon to sanction those expences which never obtained our consent? The constitution says, that money cannot be

raised without the consent of parliament. Has that not been done in the present instance? I ask, is it, or is it not, a principle to be advanced and supported in this House, that where considerable expence is to be incurred, leave for that purpose is to be obtained from parliament, and not from the executive government? When the question of barracks was under the contemplation of government, should it not have been solemnly brought before parliament, and undergone that grave consideration the importance of the subject demanded, and not merely laid before them for their approbation, after all the expence has been incurred? In the common affairs of life, if a servant comes to his master wanting 1000*l.* for any particular purpose, the master would naturally deliberate on the propriety and necessity of the proposed measure; but were his steward to inform him he had actually expended a few thousand pounds in such and such a way, the master, I presume, would be apt to startle at this being done without his previous consent; and were the steward to justify his conduct, by saying he considered that as a mere matter of form, the master would no doubt give his servant to understand, that such forms were not to be dispensed with. The steward might then be induced to justify himself on the score of necessity. Cases might certainly occur where such a plea might be admissible, but they must be cases neither of any great magnitude, nor where the same purpose could not be equally well effected in a different and more satisfactory manner.

“ We are told that the magnitude of the expence is nothing, for that all State expences must be great; I have always understood, that in proportion to the magnitude of the expence, so is there the greater reason for instituting an inquiry. The expence in the present instance is unquestionably great; and how is it attempted to be justified? We are told that the different circumstances occasioning it were unforeseen. This, indeed, if any, is the only excuse which can be made; but mark the inconsistency, observe the application of this excuse to the manner in which the subject has been treated this evening. We are told that barracks were erected, and the expence incurred upon the spur of the occasion. This is the excuse, but not satisfied with that, the right honourable gentleman, in the same breath, enters into an elaborate justification of the propriety of keeping them up as a permanent source of expence. He informs us that necessity produced all this of a sudden, and at the same time assures us that it has been long a matter of experience, that the military could not be properly accommodated in any other manner. The plan has avowedly been

been long in agitation, but ministers have never thought proper, as they ought to have done, to bring it regularly before this House. They have, on the contrary, incurred all the expence, and gone on in the prosecution of an extensive system, without the authority, and in absolute defiance of Parliament. When I talk of erecting barracks on a system, the right honourable gentleman may perhaps not chuse to understand me. I remember a dispute I had with him upon the laws of nations. Those he treated with very little ceremony, and seemed to be of a similar opinion with citizen Genet, who thought that without any great loss, they might all be thrown into the sea. If this system is to be defended, and defended in such a manner as I have heard to-night, we may dispose in the same manner of all the laws of England. We may, when we please, throw into the sea, the Commentaries of Mr. Justice Blackstone, and all the brilliant speeches on this subject delivered by the late Lord Chatham. We are triumphantly told, that our ancestors gave their occasional consent to such a measure. What! can the honourable gentleman say, there is any resemblance between small cantonments partially taking place, and the whole army of this country being constantly secluded from the rest of the inhabitants, and shut up in permanent barracks? I certainly do not ask much upon the present occasion, when I demand, that before we introduce innovations contrary to the avowed doctrines of Justice Blackstone, and other constitutional writers, parliament ought to be consulted, ought to have time for deliberation, and ought to have given its solemn decision.

“Great reliance has been placed upon the argument, that this subject was actually discussed, in the debate upon a motion brought forward by my honourable friend who spoke last. That motion was for the purpose of passing a resolution, that such a system as was then entered into of erecting barracks, was contrary to the practice and example of our ancestors. What was then done by this House? they did not put a direct negative upon this, but got rid of it by the order of the day. Can this be called a solemn decision of Parliament, upon the principle of this measure? The most that can be said of it is, that they did not disapprove of what was immediately doing, but that decision gave no countenance whatever to the unauthorized expenditure of public money. I very well recollect, that that debate, in which I took a share, by no means turned upon the principle, but upon the words of the motion. The honourable gentleman has certainly logic enough to perceive the difference, and to allow that the denial of any particular proposition

proposition is not an universal affirmation of its opposite. But how stands this question with the constitution? Its opposers say it is but a name, but a mockery of a constitution. How many melancholy facts daily occur to justify the assertion! Large sums are expended without consulting Parliament, without bringing forward any estimate whatever; a thing surely not difficult to be obtained. An argument has, with propriety, been adduced from the Civil List. The king has it not in his power to make any arrangement in his parks or pleasure grounds, where a salary is to be given to the amount of 500*l. per annum*, without an order passing the sign manual, and being approved by the lords of the Treasury. I applaud this with reluctance, as I do any thing relative to the management of the Civil List. But I have not heard of any estimate on the subject of barracks being approved by the lords of the Treasury; if there has, why has it not been presented to this House?

"The right honourable gentleman seems to hold all arguments of fact extremely cheap. He says, he understands our manner on this side the House. I think he was long enough with us to understand our sentiments likewise; and he ought to know, that when we talk of the increase of patronage, it is not as a mere matter of declamation, but as an object of serious apprehension and danger to the liberties of the country. He defends himself by saying, What! would you deprive the poor officer of this his last resource? I know not how many worthy objects may be selected to fill such situations under government, but I do venture to say, on good authority, that many are appointed for no real purpose but that of forwarding ministerial elections. There is an ostensible and a secret purpose combined. It is, in the language of the right honourable gentleman himself, like a theatrical dress, where the gold and embroidery serve to conceal the dirt and dowlas beneath. The honourable gentleman tells us, that no barrack masters were appointed without an intention of erecting barracks. I hardly, indeed, could suppose that they would be so bad as to appoint barrack masters without any intention at all. He allows, however, that there were three instances where no duty whatever was performed. He has appealed to the honour of the gentleman at the head of that department, as Barrack Master General, for the propriety and economy of the manner in which the business is conducted. Does he not recollect, that to pledge a man's honour is not the most honourable mode of accounting; and that to such a man it may be answered, I have no intention of disputing the point of honour;
 but

but I want to know what you have done with the money. For these different reasons I exceedingly approve of appointing a committee of enquiry, and if it still be resisted, I do say, however liable I may make myself to invidious observations, that we have but a mockery of a constitution. If ministers disregard all fundamental principles, if this House quietly tolerate their excesses, if the power of raising and applying money be exercised, not by the House of Commons, but the king's ministers, what is our constitution but a farce and a mockery?

"We hear many orations upon the necessity of obedience and subjection to the law; if those at the head of the government paid equal deference to the laws with the other orders of the community, we should have very little reason to complain. Example would avail ten times more than precept. It is strange that those who have the law constantly in their mouths, should with equal constancy be acting in direct opposition to it. My honourable friend who spoke before me, illustrated this subject by an allusion to what passed on the Fortification Act. The illustration was certainly in point. If this House had not entered into the examination of that system previous to its being carried into execution, what would have been the consequence? Would it have met with the fate which it experienced? By no means. Had the expence been first incurred, and the plan brought forward afterwards, this House, I believe, would have acceded to the measure. I am not, indeed, so sanguine as to imagine, that the barrack system would, in these degenerate days, have been resisted, even if it had been brought forward in a way equally regular. But at all events, ministers would have acted more openly and avowedly in the business; and if it had been thus carried, it would have been, as it ought, an act of the legislature, and not merely of the executive government. The only tools which ministers seem not to think dangerous are edge tools, they play with them with all the complacency imaginable. I repeat, that the maintaining a standing army in this country, and dissolving the connexion between the soldier and the citizen, is a subject of the highest delicacy, of the greatest intricacy, and is not thus wantonly to be sported with by ministers, without condescending to consult the wisdom of parliament? We seem to have thrown away all that constitutional jealousy which ought ever to be awake in a free country. We have sacrificed it to a false alarm. The exorbitant power and influence of the crown in this country must ever be pregnant with danger to its liberties. In better times than these, the
opinion

opinion was that it ought to be curtailed; and, in the present day, is there no ground for a continued and watchful jealousy? On the contrary, the more power we give, there is a greater cause for jealousy. Such was always the opinion of our ancestors, such ought to be our opinion, and before ministers dared, in the present instance, upon a plea of necessity, to trample upon the rights of Englishmen, it would have been but decent, even for form's sake, to have given this House an opportunity of exercising its deliberative functions before a measure was carried into execution so hostile to the general freedom and happiness of the nation?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, it was his wish to divest the question then before the House, of the general considerations in which it had been involved in the course of the debate. He did not think it necessary to enter into a discussion of the various principles which had been started, and which gentlemen had thought proper to argue. He only meant to narrow the question and confine it to the topic on which it immediately depended. At the same time however that he took notice of the discussion of general principles, he thought it but just to excuse his right honourable friend for adverting to them, as he had been unavoidably led to it by the suggestions of the honourable mover of the question. Since the doctrine of resistance had been mentioned, a doctrine which had been so completely mistated on the other side of the House, he was glad that it had once more been brought before gentlemen, as his right honourable friend had so fully explained it, that he had placed his sense of it only out of the reach of the most malevolent comment. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had been guilty of misconstruction, when he observed, that soldiers, by living apart in barracks, would be excluded the society of their fellow-subjects: did it follow, that because they were not to be continually exposed to the danger of having seditious sentiments infused into them by the factious and the discontented, that they were entirely to be shut out from the community at large? Were there not, in most hours of the day, opportunities allowed them to enjoy the conversation of their friends and relatives? Were they debarred from cultivating those pleasures which they might be enabled to relish in society? certainly not:—every proper indulgence, consistent with the welfare and happiness of the military, was permitted, and they were only prevented from society at a time when the worst disposed part of the community might, with success, instill into their minds sentiments of the most pernicious tendency, and hostile to the constitution.

The

The hours of night and of relaxation were best adapted to such dangerous purposes, and the system of barracks would only go to prevent them from mingling in the most unguarded moments with profligate and factious company. The exclusion, therefore, so much exaggerated by the right honourable gentleman, was but a partial exclusion. It did not separate them from harmless and sociable connections, but took away the frequent opportunities of contracting vices. The right honourable gentleman had maintained, that the system was a novelty unauthorized by the constitution. "We," said the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "contend, that we have been sanctioned by the judgment of the legislature, and that instead of introducing a new system, we merely carry an old one to a greater extent." The honourable gentleman said, that the principle was not approved by parliament because the motion of his honourable friend three years ago did not receive a direct negative. The reasons why it did not were evident. First, some words of the motion were objected to because they amounted to a total condemnation of the principle; secondly, others were not founded upon fact, because they asserted that our ancestors had never recognized the principle, when the contrary was undeniable, and, lastly, others could not be disputed on account of their authorities, and therefore the only way to get rid of it was by moving for the order of the day. If the principle had been wholly repugnant to parliament, the country, and the constitution, would they not have taken steps to stop it? And consequently, as they did not, their conduct was to be construed into a tacit and implied approbation.

The manner and process of erecting barracks could not furnish any argument with respect to the novelty of them; a slow expenditure had gradually taken place for four years, and though there might be some irregularity in not submitting estimates of the expences to the House of Commons, yet substantially considered, the judgment of parliament had passed on the subject. He would ask, if any thing had been undertaken or executed to the prejudice of the public, by profuse and unnecessary expenditures? The right honourable gentleman was of opinion that there had; that was indeed a matter of opinion, unsupported by proofs: he would however maintain, that if the whole plan were again to commence, nothing could be done cheaper and more for the permanent advantage of the nation. If there were any reason, any kind of ground to say, that the *quantum* of the expences had not been moderate, some plea might justly appear against the conduct of the executive government,

vernment. But since there did not appear the smallest ground to prove either want of wisdom in the system, or mismanagement in the execution, with what propriety could the House consent to institute an inquiry?

It had been argued that government had no right to employ money in extraordinary services. Such an assertion was evidently unfounded; it stood contradicted by facts of the most authentic nature; was unwarranted by long experience; and would if admitted into practice, be productive of the greatest injury to the public service. The reasons adduced by those gentlemen who contended for an inquiry, were rather whimsical: One stated, that the old system of barracks, adhered to in this country, was only an exception to the general principle; others maintained, that it was never practised, and treated it as a novelty; while a third asserted that there were only a few barracks in the northern part of the kingdom. What however has been advanced by his right honourable friend? That formerly there were barracks sufficient to contain twenty thousand men. This statement had not been contradicted, on the contrary, it had been admitted in its fullest force. Yet gentlemen continued to oppose that measure as an innovation, which really was nothing more than a prudent and necessary extension of an old institution. The substantial question for consideration was, whether the House would have foregone the expences incurred, if the estimates had been laid before them, and whether they would then refuse their assent to extraordinaries so beneficially employed for the public safety? Upon this principle, he said, he should give the motion his decided negative.

Mr. *W. Smith* supported the motion. He contended, in opposition to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the system of erecting barracks was entirely new, and not recognized by any principle of the British constitution, and objected to upon all occasions by the best authorities. He observed, whatever motives there might be for it, that this system had been put into execution to the greatest extent on the other side the Tweed. If the right honourable secretary's argument, that this was the cheapest way of quartering troops was founded, why did he not submit that to the House at the outset of the business? One of the best excuses, and indeed one of those that had occasioned this system being borne with the patience it has been, was the relief given to inn-keepers; allowing, however, as he did, the great burden and inconvenience which they felt by quartering soldiers, might not compensation have been made to them; and if but a part of the enormous expence of barracks had been applied

plied as an increale to the daily pay of the men, it would have afforded means of a much more constitutional and essential relief to the inn-keepers than the erection of Barracks. It was said, that the expence was chiefly incurred in barracks for the cavalry, and it appeared that about a million and a half of money had been expended in the accommodation of only 5000 cavalry. The right honourable secretary had said, that our method of quartering soldiers hitherto was anomalous to the conduct of all other countries; he hoped in God it always would be so; our constitution was anomalous to that of most other countries; and he trusted that the constitutional mode of quartering soldiers, adopted and approved by the wisdom and experience of our ancestors in this limited monarchy, would not be abandoned for the system of barracks, fit only for the most absolute and despotic governments.

Mr. *Courtenay* said, he could not give a silent vote on this question, without injustice to his honourable friend (the Secretary at war,) who had not been treated with all that candour and fairness to which he thought his honourable friend so justly entitled. From an uncommon species of ingenuous modesty (not always to be found in a minister) his honourable friend had concealed from the House a most extraordinary and ample fund, to supply in a great measure the enormous expence of erecting barracks in every part of the kingdom. He had been accidentally informed that by a new and most judicious order just issued from the war office, that all the dung of the dragoon horses, which from time immemorial had remained a *douceur*, and perquisite of the soldiers, was now to be sold, and the produce remitted to the war office, to be lodged in his Majesty's exchequer, and applied to the service of the state. Mr. *Courtenay* said, he entertained the highest respect and admiration of the present administration; he must own he had entertained doubts whether in their present arduous and critical situation, they had condescended to contract their comprehensive and elevated minds to such a minute object of oeconomy; such, however, was the nature and character of true and elevated genius; nothing could be too minute or microscopical for its investigation. Thus a new and unexpected resource was discovered, to support public credit, supply the treasury, and to prove to all Europe that our ways and means were inexhaustible; gold was extracted from the very dung of our cavalry; and the unprecedented oeconomy of his honourable friend, by the erection and extension of the new system of barracks, supported the finances of the country. The orders expressly issued from the war

office were, that whoever, by a fair competition, offered the most advantageous terms for a whole year's dung, should have the preference. From the character of his honourable friend, every competitor might give in his propositions with the utmost confidence, well assured that no disingenuous proceedings, and no partiality, even to a freeholder of Norwich, would preclude any person from the fair and just profits which might result from the public-spirited and honest competition. Nor was this all; the board of agriculture had taken it into their serious consideration, and from the wisdom and patriotic principles which actuated them and their secretaries, could our expectations be too sanguine? Perhaps if they could do it with due decorum, this happy regulation might be extended to the infantry; if so a standing army in time of peace would be of the greatest utility, the waste lands improved, and cultivation carried to the utmost perfection, by the erection of barracks. The ingenuity of the secretary of that board indeed almost insured success; he, like Virgil, (as Mr. Addison had classically observed) could scatter his dung with a grace and majesty; and the royal domains principally derived their rich and flourishing crops from the manure he had bestowed on them. Mr. Courtenay added, that he really was dubious of the information he had received relative to this new, grand, and astonishing regulation; till he had his information sanctioned by the authority of his honourable friend.

The laudable and minute attention paid by the ministers, both to the form and essence of the constitution, was exemplified in another point. It had been usual, during the assizes, to remove the troops, lest even the appearance of the military should excite a jealousy, so tenacious were our ancestors of their civil rights. Since the new barrack system, however, as that was a measure become impracticable, what was the expedient? Why were the soldiers confined to the barracks during that period; as the same discipline could not be so well extended to the officers, they were allowed to parade the town in coloured clothes; in that disguise they were graciously permitted to walk about. The privates were by this means prevented from frequenting the courts of law, and from hearing any doctrines which might relax their morals, and instil notions incompatible with the implicit obedience with which it was their duty to act on all occasions.

In another point, Mr. Courtenay asserted, that his honourable friend had been misrepresented, and his expressions perverted. He had said that the soldiers, by being shut up in barracks,

racks, were secluded from hearing the seditious and debauching orations and arguments which had been held out to them, and their morals and principles were consequently preserved pure and uncontaminated. All this was strictly true, according to the explanation he should give. He was too well acquainted with the former sentiments of his honourable friend, with his enthusiastic attachment to constitutional revolutionary doctrines, to mistake his meaning. He knew that Mr. Reeves and his association had ramified into committees, and sub-committees, and inferior clubs over the whole kingdom. His honourable friend knew too well, that they anxiously endeavoured to uncitizen the soldier—to make him despise all the rights and privileges of an Englishman, and only to look up to the crown and his superior officers; to forget that he was paid by the people, and to imbibe those mean degrading doctrines which Mr. Reeves's associations, committees and sub-committees had so industriously circulated. That the House of Commons were a corrupt and unnecessary branch of the legislature, and actually an injurious check on the gracious and beneficent prerogatives of the crown, and that our happiness would be promoted by losing our liberties. His honourable friend therefore rejoiced that the soldiers were crammed in barracks, and cut off from the society of the parson, the exciseman, and the members of Mr. Reeves's club. These at the same time were conclusive answers to some gentlemen, who did not enter into the philosophic retirement of his honourable friend's logic. The late Lord Chatham, Blackstone, Montesquieu, &c. all coincided in sentiment, that separating the soldier from the society of the citizen, might be attended with the most dangerous consequences in a free country. Why? Because the spirit and character of the military would soon preponderate; they would consider themselves as a distinct and separate part of the community, neither actuated by the same interests, wishes, nor generous sentiments of the people. But his honourable friend had acted on a different motive, a motive which those enlightened statesmen, lawyers, and philosophers must have approved. He had separated the soldier from the general mass of the people, by which they would now be corrupted and perverted; in the barracks, the true, free, and liberal principles of the constitution might be instilled into them, and by that means they would become the guardians of our rights and liberties, and a patriot and soldier would be synonymous terms.

Mr. Courtenay said, he had but a single observation more to make. His honourable friend had warmly and generously expatiated on the heart-felt pleasure which he, in common with

the

the rest of his majesty's ministers, enjoyed, in having an opportunity of relieving the half-pay list, by the appointment of meritorious officers to the employment of barrack-masters. They had six and fifty places to bestow; and he was perfectly persuaded that fifty, at least, gallant and veteran officers had been provided for by this noble arrangement, without any regard to election-jobs, or any improper influence. He would therefore move for a new list of such barrack-masters, that the country might have another proof of the virtue, patriotism, and generosity of his majesty's administration.

Mr. Grey said, he had no inclination to enter into the general argument, but rose in consequence of a statement of his own on a former night, which had been alluded to and contradicted. He meant by his assertion, that the sum expended on the erection of barracks amounted to 1,100,000*l.* The right honourable paymaster of the forces had said it did not exceed 900,000*l.* Upon further examination, Mr. Grey said, he found it to be 1,026,000*l.* the papers on the table proved it, and that large sum was expended without the consent or knowledge of parliament, a transaction which from its nature and magnitude called for most serious enquiry. With regard to what the right honourable secretary had said on the subject of patronage, he thanked him, as he did no more than restate precisely what he had said before; and whether he had said it loosely, or no one fact was admitted, that a person had been appointed barrack-master for two years where there was now to be no barracks, and being an useful man at electioneering, he was now, by way of compensation, appointed to a more lucrative place, in the post which he might be equally well qualified to fill. He did not mean to argue the question of the propriety of the system of erecting barracks; he agreed with the right honourable gentleman that the question before the House was much narrowed; and, as that gentleman had himself acknowledged the irregularity, at least, of incurring so much expence without the consent of parliament, he hoped his future conduct would be influenced by what he had stated to be his opinion that day. He contended that the approbation of the House was not to be implied from the negative put upon the motion of another honourable friend of his formerly; on the contrary, he said, he thought that if the House had really known of this system, they never could have consented to it. He had only one or two questions to put. What must we look for as permanent barracks on a peace establishment? If the new barracks were to hold 34,000 troops, and the old accommodated 20,000, this would be 54,000 men on a peace establishment,

establishment; that, he trusted, no minister would dare to promise to this country. It had been said that the barracks might not be filled with the troops; how then could they make out that the cheapest way of quartering men was by keeping up barracks for many more than were wanted? The principal question to which he called for an answer was respecting the expence incurred for temporary barracks. There were two accounts, one of 243,000*l.* the other of 314,000*l.* it was necessary to know whether these were distinct accounts, or whether the lesser was included in the greater sum; whether the total was expended during the last five years, or all expended in 1795? If ministers knew it when they gave in the first account, ought they to have concealed it? Through the whole of this business, as on many other occasions, he accused ministers of setting the privileges of that House, and the principles of the constitution, at defiance. It was with a view to get an answer to this last question that he had risen, and when the papers he had moved for were introduced, he would go farther into the matter.

Mr. Steele said, as the honourable gentleman had alluded to a former debate, he must be excused for doing so too; he therefore recapitulated the statement he had given in his former speech, contending for the correctness of the accounts and the wish that ministers had to give every possible information. He said, he differed widely from the honourable gentleman's idea, that the barracks built and building warranted the assumption, that so large a peace establishment as 50 or even 40,000 troops was to be kept up; the fact was not so, nor were there barracks yet for more than 15,000, and when the intended plan was complete, they would not exceed 25,000. A correct and fair account had, he declared, been given of the distribution of the vote of credit in the usual way, though he would not at that moment take upon him to state precisely the periods at which different sums had been expended. He defended ministers from the accusation of misapplying the vote of credit, and said, that they had done nothing more than every other administration had done before them.

Mr. Grey wished the right honourable gentleman much joy of his defence. That he who came into office to reform abuses and extravagance, should be justified by bad precedents; by precedents which Mr. Pitt himself had so loudly condemned, was indeed extraordinary; but it was such a justification as needed no reply. Mr. Grey here explained respecting the barrack accounts.

Mr. Steele said, that the new barracks were to hold 34,000 men on a peace establishment.

Mr. *Steele* again defended those accounts, censured Mr. *Grey* for his suspicions of their fairness, and assured him he had pointed out nothing improper in them, notwithstanding all his activity.

Mr. *Grey* said, his suspicions were such as became a member of Parliament, whose duty it is to watch, with a jealous eye, the expenditure of the public money. He did not plume himself on his activity; but after seeing such erroneous accounts as had lately been presented to that House, he must take shame to himself that he had not been more active in detecting them,

Mr. *Sheridan*, Mr. *Fox*, and Mr. *Grey* contended, that, from the title of the two accounts, there was on the face of them, such a palpable inconsistency, that some explanation was absolutely necessary. In the account upon the table 314,000*l.* is stated to be paid to the barrack master general, and expended in the erection of temporary barracks, upon a warrant, dated 13th July, 1795; while the account given in by ministers last year, the title of which was, "An account of money issued to the barrack master general for sums expended and due for the erection of temporary barracks, up to the 31st December, 1795," amounted only to 243,000*l.* a difference of 70,000*l.* which must either be in the hands of the barrack-master general, or remain to be otherwise accounted for.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. *Steele* contended, that the accounts were right; and, although the warrants bore a particular date, it did not follow, that the money was all issued at one time, and that they believed almost, if not the whole of 314,000*l.* was expended in 1795.

General *Smith* made a short reply; and the House divided,

<i>Ayes</i>	-	24
<i>Noes</i>	-	98

Majority 74

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, April 11.

Read the Bills on the table, and adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

MONDAY, April 11.

Lascelles Estate, Sheffield's Estate, Hatton's Estate, Ella Inclosure, Leominster Canal, Election attendance, and Ramsey Drainage Bills, were read a third time and passed.

MILLERS BILL.

The order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a committee on the Bill for regulating the tolls of millers, being moved for and read,

Mr. *Popham* said, that he wished to change the frame of the Bill, by obliging millers to use proper weights and scales; and also to be paid for grinding in money, and not in kind.

The *Speaker* observed, that if the honourable member wished merely to make alterations, he was then informal; but he might introduce them at some other stage.

The House then resolved itself into a committee, in the course of which several clauses were submitted, and a desultory conversation took place on their propriety, between various members. After several amendments the House resumed, and the report was ordered to be received on Thursday the 14th.

A message was received from the Lords, notifying to the commons that they had passed several public and private Bills, among which were the Scarborough (in the island of Tobago) port Bill and the American Intercourse Bill.

Mr. *Abbot* gave notice that he would, the next day move for a committee upon the expiring laws, which leave to report thereon to the House.

Mr. *Sheridan* stated that it was his intention to have moved the next day for a committee of enquiry into the general circumstance and misconduct of the war in the West-Indies; but as there were some papers upon the table of the House of Lords, which would enable him to discuss the subject better, he should postpone his motion till he had consulted those papers, and bring it on a few days after.

FINANCE.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* gave notice that on that day se'night, in a committee of ways and means, he would move for a substitute for the tax upon printed calicoes, which he had been obliged to relinquish. He would also take that opportunity of providing for some unforeseen occurrences, of proposing certain measures for funding a part of the navy debt, and of submitting to the committee a plan for remedying

ing the grievance to which the commercial world are subjected by the present scarcity of money.

Mr. Grey moved that there be laid upon the table an account of the arrears of the Land Tax, standing out at Lady-Day 1796, with the names of the receivers, and the measures which have been adopted to enforce payment of these arrears.

The account was ordered to be produced.

WEST INDIA SLAVERY.

Mr. Francis rose pursuant to the notice he had given for leave to bring in a Bill to improve the condition of negroes, and other slaves in the British colonies. He said he rose strongly impressed with an idea of the practicability of the measures he intended to recommend, although they might be objectionable in some parts, and imperfect in others, confiding however in the merit of his cause, which the more he considered it the more reason he had to acknowledge the expediency of it, he flattered himself that there was not a man in the House, including all the learning which instructed and adorned it, who would not agree with him in opinion as to the general principle. Without entering, therefore, into a heavy, dull, and elaborate exordium, he proposed to go at once to the business, requesting the patience of the House however *ex debito*. The importance of the subject, indeed, might entitle him to claim the attention of the Speaker and the House, did not the apprehension of his own weakness counteract that expectation. To that weakness, therefore, he claimed indulgence; urging as some apology for undertaking an affair of such magnitude, that although he distrusted his own powers, he at least confided in the merit of the measure he should have the honour to propose. For that reason he hoped he should not be interrupted, especially as he was liable to be affected even by signs and gestures; he hoped also, at the same time, that no gentleman would anticipate the conclusion he might deduce, or confound the object with the means, but reserve their judgment upon his reasoning, until he had fairly gone through the whole of what he had to offer.

He lamented that he did not see an honourable gentleman in the House (Mr. Wilberforce) who had formerly been the leader of every question that involved the amelioration of the state of the negroes, and from whom he expected strong support; and he lamented the absence of that honourable gentleman the more, because he understood he was detained by indisposition. It was not, however, from that honourable gentleman alone that he expected assistance, he hoped to receive

it from every class of members in that House, if gentlemen meant to act consistently, and to prove that they had been candid and sincere. First, he expected assistance from the enemies of the trade, who formed a resolute phalanx, because he had given them full scope for their intentions, and had gone fully with them, and consequently he could not suppose that they would say they would not go the length he did, because his plan compounded with the trade and traffic, and did not follow up that object which they attempted to attain, the coming at once to a total abolition. To these gentlemen all that he could say, was, that he had endeavoured to do all the good he could. He next expected assistance from the planters, and those who had hitherto opposed an abolition; because, if they had been sincere in their declarations of a wish to improve the condition of the negroes, although they objected to the abolition of the Slave Trade, he had almost reason to expect a similar plan would come from them. Since he understood then that the planters had at all times concurred in the idea of the necessity for establishing fair and reasonable regulations, he should make no apology to them for stirring the question, but look for their concurrence in what he should propose. Perhaps they might retort upon him by asking him, since the question was at rest, why did he chose again to stir it? In that case he would reply, that it was not at rest, that it had never been at rest, nor ever should be at rest, while he retained a seat in that House. If there were no other advocate he would singly stand up for it; and if it were to die, he promised to revive. He remembered when the proposition was first introduced for an abolition of the Slave Trade, that a venerable person in that House (Mr. Grosvenor) said, "Are we not all happy in this country? Why then should we disturb ourselves with foreign injuries?" Such arguments might be used upon the present occasion, but if that honourable gentleman were a member at this day, his arguments should not ueter him. Lastly, he expected assistance from the House for its own honour; for although a resolution of the House to abolish the Slave Trade had been lately negatived,

"Lay not that flattering unction to your soul." said he, since it is both the station and the duty of this House to attend to every question. When he recollected the different resolutions indeed of the 1st of May, 1792, and that of 1796, he knew not which to abide by, but he was therefore enabled to appeal to the House against itself. That of 1792 was a resolution for the abolition of the Slave Trade in 1796.

and yet when a Bill was afterwards introduced upon that resolution, it was thrown out. He was sorry to have marked in their proceedings so much inconsistency of character; he did not, he said, wish to speak of their votes in a disrespectful way, he could not however predict the verdict which would be passed upon them by the pen of the future historian. There was one right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) whose support on the present occasion, perhaps, he might be expected to court; and if his cause would have permitted such a solicitation, in spite of any enmity, which however unprovoked on his part, might subsist between them, he would not have scrupled to invoke his aid. But he had other resources in his own honour and in honourable conclusions, and to these alone he was permitted to apply. As to that right honourable gentleman he meant to provoke, but not to offend; to irritate, but not to insult him, for provocation was not offence, neither was incentive reproach. On the present occasion he would not address himself to his political integrity (of that he gave him credit for as much he pleased to claim) but to his political discernment. He would ask him, if he was satiated with the honours and emoluments of office, or if he did not look still higher than he was, if he did not regard his future fame, and aspire to the commendation of a succeeding age? By his conduct such considerations seemed for a moment to have escaped his notice. With the aid of seventy voices, to which he was usually indebted in the votes of that House, he was not able to muster, or would not, above seventy members on the side of the question which he espoused! If he did not look to virtue, he might at least have looked to fame. He had no hesitation in declaring what was the public opinion out of doors of the part he took in that business. It was understood that he was not in earnest when he made his protestations in favour of the abolition, and that his support of the abolition was not real but pretended. Such was the impression on the public mind, and that impression it would, he believed, be difficult to remove.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* spoke to order. The mode of arguing with which the honourable gentleman commenced was not, he said, to be tolerated in that House. He spoke of the Chancellor of the Exchequer not as his friend, but as a member of parliament, and upon that ground he contended, that by the rules of the House, the honourable gentleman was not entitled to say that the conduct of any member of parliament was dictated by improper motives, or founded upon disingenuous principles. Every gentleman in that House had a right to claim credit for the motives he assigned for his own conduct.

Mr.

Mr. *Francis* proceeded. He said he did not mean to be guilty of any thing unparliamentary or irregular, and if he had not been interrupted, he was going to declare that he had always given the right honourable gentleman credit and applause for his professions. He remembered the illustrious speech of the right honourable gentleman in 1792, than which, nothing could be more captivating within the power of human eloquence. He sat with unwearied attention, and attributed it to a grand moral action. What was it then? Was it only the imitation of a grand moral action? If so, go to the theatres or to the library, and you may alike be delighted and deceived. At that time, however, he voted with the right honourable gentleman, and looked upon it as one of those grand circumstances which do but rarely happen; fortunate, in his opinion, would it have been for the right honourable gentleman, in point of fame, if that had been the end of his political life. Since that period he had descended from the summit of his political glory, and to shew what were the effects of the late decision, he would relate an anecdote exactly as he heard it, not to excite laughter by any trifling incident, but to illustrate and enforce his argument. The day after the division, a member was asked on which side he voted? He replied "that he voted, as usual, with his friend the minister." Oh! then you voted for the Abolition? said the interrogator. "No, (replied the member) I voted against the Bill; but, notwithstanding, I voted with the minister."

So much for that part of his observations. But he again called upon those who opposed the Abolition, and declared themselves ready for regulation, to manifest their sincerity by voting with him. First, however, it would be natural to ask him whether he yielded to the trade and slavery? No, he yielded to necessity, and should attempt that which was next, and in that case he was drawn into this dilemma; the failure of his object would confirm the existing mischief he complained of, while the success of it would allow the trade. There was however good and evil in all human councils, and the rejection of his motion would unmask a great deal of falsehood, while the success of it would accomplish the direct good, and progressively much more. He would shew, therefore, how far he was open to composition, and then, as the proprietors and planters had professed themselves ready to improve the condition of the slaves, though not abolish the trade, he would invite them to join their endeavours for that purpose. It would then be natural to ask—Do you mean

to emancipate the slaves? As he stated to the House about a fortnight ago, he neither meditated abolition or emancipation. It was not in his power to urge any arguments for emancipation, nor if it were, would he venture upon it, because he could not make an adequate provision. What then did he mean to do? Did he mean to give them equal rights? No—that would be equivalent to emancipation. What then? He meant to give them every benefit that was compatible with a rational and profitable demand upon their service, and such as their situation would allow. He did not mean to abolish service, but to improve their minds; and, by so doing, improve the minds of their masters also. To abolish service, you must abolish man—for service is not slavery. The object of his motion, therefore, was to amend their actual condition, and make them capable of more amendment; in fine, to make them good servants instead of bad slaves.

The first inquiry upon these grounds would be what is the actual condition of the negroes? To shew what their pretended happiness was, he referred to a pamphlet entitled “The true state of the question,” which stated, that they were provided with a house and garden of their own, having food and cloathing supplied by their masters, and having their wives and children protected by the law. Such a description would represent a West India plantation as a kind of Paradise. He had no doubt that there were many individuals who treated their slaves with considerable kindness. What however was the inference which he derived from the admission? The admission itself, in particular instances, amounted to a confession that this treatment ought to be general, and all he wished was, to enforce universally what at present was only partially practised.

He would next shew the reverse of this statement, and what the real condition of the slaves was. They had no law but will, no government but the whip. They had no protection whatsoever from the magistrates. They enjoyed none of the blessings nor advantages of marriage, in as far as it was understood to constitute the *vinculum matrimonii*, and to ensure legal protection to their families. They had no law, no religion, no principle of propagation. If they had these benefits they must multiply, and if they have them not, the contrary must be the fact; one proposition proves the other. If the reverse of the first proposition be true, then it appears, that from the quantity of slaves imported into the colonies of late years, the population would have increased to such a degree that

that they must have sought other outlets. The necessity, therefore, of continuing the trade proved the axiom to demonstration.

He should be asked then do you mean to give them the benefits of law, government, morals, religion and marriage? Mr. Francis declared, he would give them none of these, for they were not in a situation capable of receiving them. They must first create a capacity in the negroes to receive those benefits, the enjoyment of which was only capatible with a certain degree of mental improvement and political civilization. As well might corn be sown upon gravel or marble, as knowledge communicated with a hope of impresson to a barbarous mind. It might strike some gentlemen, perhaps, that the language was rash and irreverent; he assured them however, that it flowed from a proper sense of religion, and the most sincere piety; that it was absolutely impossible to instruct mankind in the knowledge of religion, as long as they remained in a state of savage barbarity. No man possessed of common feeling or common intellect, would deny, that religion was necessary to the very existence of society. It was equally true, on the other hand, that some degree of mental improvement was necessary to the existence of religious principles. When an attempt was made to teach an uninformed negro to pray, it should be remembered that despair and abandoned guilt never pray. In the parable of the pharisee and the publican, the publican hid his face. If you would have negroes pray, you must first teach them to hope, or they will never do it. You baptise them, when you might as well baptise your dogs and horses; for what can he see in the ruler of the universe, but a being whose benefits are intercepted from him, who has lavished all his good things upon white men, and who has dealt out nothing but slavery, usury, and oppression to the blacks. Such a being, uninstructed as he was, a negro would be more ready to conceive him to be a demon than a spirit of love. The baptism of negroes, therefore, is the last act of human impiety. He would go to a higher authority for the truth of this doctrine, by quoting from a book, which, whether considered as a divine or human production, certainly contained in it perfect wisdom, and was moreover a book in the recommendation of which, as a layman, he might be thought disinterested. He then quoted, from the parable of the sower and the seed in the New Testament, that verse which says, "The only seed which brought forth fruit was that which fell on good ground,"—the meaning of which was, that the mind must be capable of instruction,

tion, it must be prepared. What then is your remedy? In one word, it is your property; not in your money, nor in your moveables, but in land. Property is the foundation of society. In that acorn is the oak contained, and under that tree he may flourish and be happy, that is with time, means, and security. Property originates in cultivation, and out of that single act all the rest will gradually proceed, or may be ingrafted on it; we have it from the mouth of a King, "Truth shall flourish out of the earth."—" *Veritas de terra orta est.*"

The idea was not new even to the planters, even at present they pretended that their slaves were in possession of a certain quantity of property. Was there, however, no example of the practice? There certainly was—among the Romans, the slave possessed a *peculium*, in which he was protected by the laws. Out of the profits of this *peculium*, also, he was permitted to purchase another slave, and sometimes his freedom. Of all slaves, perhaps the condition of the Helots in Sparta was the most cruel, oppressed, and abominable; yet they had almost all the landed property under their management, by a fixed tenure. The Spartans only amused themselves in peace, or took up arms in war, while the Helots or slaves had the cultivation of the lands entrusted to their care, upon a regular payment of a fixed produce to their masters. The Helot was as secure in his property as any lawful heir with us. Such also was the situation of the Zemindars in Bengal. It was to be observed, moreover, that the Spartans had often recourse to the Helots both for personal assistance in battle and supplies of money, whereby the slave was better treated. This might also be taken for a proof why the slaves in our own plantations were so ready to take up arms. The inference he drew from that fact was different from that generally deduced from it. In his opinion, it was not a proof of affection for their masters, and contentment with their state, as had been urged; his conclusion was, that the condition of a negro, as a soldier, was better than the condition of a negro in the fields. That was precisely the case with the Helots, and there was little doubt but what it was so with the slaves in our colonies.

In society, or in contract with society, property is infinitely more necessary to a slave than a freeman. Without it, he is incapable of receiving any social benefit or modern improvement. The savage is satisfied with his liberty, and having little or no idea of property, has still less of laws or settlement; while in society a freeman may do without property, because

because he is free. There is an adage that "service is the man's calling": that is because he knows it to be voluntary. That formed the essential distinction between slavery and service. There could be no doubt whatever that services are reciprocal; and it would be of service to the vulgar to know that servants are more indebted to the master, than the master to his servants. In whatever degree freedom can be imparted to the slave, provided it be accompanied with profit, the more vigorous and powerful that slave will be. Montesquieu has related that the labour of the mines was maintained by little privileges, perquisites, and profits, so that men became reconciled to that most horrible of all employments, to dig as it were in the centre of the earth for life, on account of the little advantages annexed to their employments; and thus Cicero truly observes "*Cupiditate peculii nullam conditionem recusant durissimæ servitutis.*"

These were the principles upon which he formed his motion. The general object was to give the slaves a legal allotment of a cottage and piece of land, with time and implements to cultivate it, and security for the produce. He was not prepared for objections, and merely submitted his motion as some foundation for future proceedings. He thought it would be both convenient and useful to enforce such regulations by law, because some compulsion would be necessary to embrace all the islands, and to oblige every planter and proprietor to adopt it. Some islands might perhaps be better qualified than others. The best way, however, to enforce it generally, appeared to be by suffering no planter or proprietor to keep more negroes on his estate than he could really feed, in the same manner as farmers, in this country, proportion their servants to the stock of their farms. By keeping more negroes than they can really feed, planters are guilty of unnecessary cruelty. There should also be an allowance in favour of marriage, and the slave ought to hold his allotment of land for life, and not to be removeable. He wished to bring the condition of a negro slave as nearly as possible to that of a *villain regardant*, under the feudal system. Where marriage was encouraged, they ought to be protected, on which account penalties should be levied upon rapes and seduction. Marriage could never be expected to be frequent while the wife remained at the disposal of the overseer, and parents were reduced to look upon their children as a curse, rather than a blessing. He did not intend to name the penalties, because although he had studied the subject closely, he had not decided upon them; he entered, however, so far into the detail as to be of opinion that no man should be suffered

to act as an overseer unless he were married, nor then, unless he had arrived at a certain age, because he thought it necessary to have some check upon the passions of an overseer; and as women were best suited to look after women, his wife must be trusted with the care of the female slaves.

The greatest improvement of all, though subsequent in place, would be to remove the lash from the hand of the overseer. Accounts of punishment, inflicted by this weapon had been produced in evidence, and some of them, particularly on a woman in gestation, were too horrible to repeat. The remedy which he proposed for this was to establish a jurisdiction of slaves over one another. It might be said that you could never bring them to do justice. He was of a contrary opinion. He should be always loath to take the account of a slave's transgression from an overseer, and he believed that good and humane men so long as they found their returns good, had been often imposed upon by so doing. The method he suggested had already been practised. It was to judge the culprit by a jury, who were to be selected from the best of men, and a right of challenge was to be given both to the overseer and the offender. One of the jury also should be chosen to inflict the punishment, and the overseer might preside to mitigate or remit the punishment, but should never be allowed to judge nor execute. If there was any danger of injustice to be apprehended from this mode, he was inclined to think that instead of being too lenient it would lean to severity. As to the practicability of it, a gentleman, who might possibly be known to many members of that House, but with whom he had not the happiness to be acquainted, had already done it. The gentleman he alluded to was Sir Philip Gibbs, of the island of Barbadoes. Let gentlemen look to the sepoy service in India, they would find the trial, and execution of sepoy malefactors disposed of in the same way, and justice has never failed in any one instance; on the contrary, the commanding officer has often been disposed to mitigate. He gave an instance of a man supposed to be mad, who assassinated Captain Ewers at the head of his regiment, when the grenadiers immediately closed upon him, and they could hardly be prevented from tying him to a horse's tail, and having him torn to pieces. He was afterwards executed with some acts of barbarity. Sir Philip Gibbs has given his slaves land and stock, he encourages marriage, and never has them tried or punished, but by a jury of their own species. The consequence of these wise regulations is, that his negroes do double work, because they are well fed, and no man is better served.

Mr.

Mr. Francis said he did not know this worthy man, but he respected him for the soundness of his principles.

There were other regulations to be adopted, such as the appointment of tribunals and magistrates, from persons of great authority and independent situations. This part he confessed he had not prepared, but he would mention another regulation, which was hinted to him by a relation of his, Mr. Godschall Johnson, which related all so to the internal state, and was extremely necessary. He meant the appointment of magistrates of the market on the coast of Africa, to see that traders did not add to the separation of families, that the husband was not torn away from the wife, nor the mother carried into slavery without the child. If it be said that most of these things were already granted and enjoyed, he took it as he before stated, as an admission, that they ought to be so, and provided they were, there could be no objection to a law of that description, since the compulsion would thereby be no burden.

Before he brought this plan before the House, he said, he had deemed it advisable to consult with Mr. Burke upon it, because though that gentleman had separated himself from those persons with whom he was formerly connected, that separation had not impaired their friendship. Mr. Burke's apprehension of his plan outstripped his explanation, and he found that he had anticipated his intentions, only his vast and comprehensive mind, with its usual expansion, had framed a wider plan. One sketch of it he had given some time ago to a gentleman in Ireland, and another lately to a right honourable gentleman in that House. Mr. Francis said he had not seen it, but from what he understood of it, he thought it embraced too much at once. If we were to speculate upon either, he should prefer his own; because his own was progressive. They were not, however, he conceived, to be compared, and if Mr. Burke's plan were to be attempted to be put in execution, he ought to be in the House himself to conduct it, for no vulgar mind could reach to the execution of his grand designs. He would gladly give way to him, because *non foret incertus*, and because he found himself unable to wield the armour of Achilles.

The next question that presented itself would be through what medium is this plan to be executed. The greatest difficulty lay in the execution, in which any law, on this subject of all others, was most likely to fail. No effective protection he was persuaded could be afforded to negroes, until they are gradually raised to a state of mind and character, that shall entitle them to credit for their evidence. When he

looked to the power and means, the plan might be good, and the means unadvisable, or *vice versa*. He did not, however, choose to leave the plan of execution to the colonial legislatures, because he conceived they would be both incapable and unwilling to enforce them. It was hardly possible to expect that so many islands should concur in one plan, and he was furthermore inclined to draw a conclusion that they would not do it, from the spirit and tendency of their laws. If there were one provincial or colonial assembly over all the islands, then possibly that assembly might have the power. The general spirit of their laws, however, was to enforce slavery, not protect it. There might, it was true, be some acts of a different aspect, but if there were those acts were never executed. For wickedness their laws are like the laws of Pandemonium, and for ignorance and folly, like the laws of Bedlam, and not like any act of legislation. For instance, in case of an injury to a slave, whose bones may be broken, or whose eye may be knocked out, no compensation is made to the slave himself, but to the aggrieved party. And who is this aggrieved party but the slave, you would say, whose eye was excavated, or whose arm was fractured? No, the aggrieved party is the proprietor of the slave who has done the injury, but is supposed to feel the loss in his servant's incapacity to labour, and thus the situation of the slave is aggravated, and the cruelty of the proprietor encouraged. It might however be asked, would you stir the question, and hazard the consequence of legislating for the colonies with the example of America before you? In answer to that, he would reply, that there was a wide difference between America and the West India islands, and that he rejoiced with the late Lord Chatham, that America resisted. America had the right on her side, which the West India Islands would not have if they were to secede from the mother country. If however they were to do so, he had an internal confidence that we could bear the loss. It was not to be concluded, therefore, that he undervalued the colonies; that would be an unfair, and not a logical conclusion. As to the secession of America, he rejoiced, because it opened one asylum for freedom at least, which he was very happy to see, since there was no prospect of her long retaining any settlement in Europe. If he were asked how he could prove that America had the right on her side, he should say, that she never thought of revolting till taxation was imposed, and that, before that time, she was as a pupil to his tutor, or a child to its parent. There is an essential difference between legislating for the
good

good of an object and taking money from it. This country had no right to take the property of America, because America was not represented. Nor are the West India Islands represented, some might say. What! are they not represented? Who are they, then, that carry questions by majorities? Are they not proprietors who have not mortgaged their estates here, that stand up for the planters and proprietors; and is not the greater part of West India property here in loans and mortgages? Besides, what weapons have the West India Islands to resist with, if they were resolved to do so? They must submit to force, though he scorned force as much as any one. It may be said, we have no right to legislate for them; as they have all internal legislatures. Would the right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Pitt), or any man say, that parliament had no right to legislate for the West India islands? He owned we had no right to legislate for them capriciously, but we certainly had a right to legislate for them on great and adjudged cases. The colonial assemblies, however, were not entitled to complain, because they make no scruple of legislating for a class of men twenty times more numerous than themselves without their consent; nay, to govern them *ad arbitrium* without any legislation at all. The existence of two such classes as the negroes and the planters, made the interposition of the British legislature indispensibly necessary. Had they ever given up the right of legislating for them?—Confessedly not; for by Governor Jonstone's Act, in 1778, they were only bound to abstain from taxing them, and he did not believe that there was any other act of a different tendency, the protecting power having a claim to obedience though not to money.

Another distinction was, that in the nature of things, and in the course of time, America must have become free. The Herculean infant would have been too big for its cradle, it would have burst from its leading-strings, and have acted for itself. The extent of the coast and population of America would in time have made her independent, if our folly and injustice had not hastened it, while the islands cannot grow. Their limits are fixed by the sea, as their power is by the nature of their population.

Upon these grounds, he said, he should move for leave to bring in a Bill. Gentlemen might see, *in limine*, whether it was to be resisted, if not, the Bill was prepared; and, provided it was suffered to be brought in, he should propose to have it read a first time and printed, and as the detail of it was immense, and it was probably full of imperfections, he should

then wish to have it stand over to the next session of parliament, that if it should afterwards be rejected, it might serve as a foundation for another course of proceeding. He had done enough, he conceived, for the House to have a general view of his intentions, and the reasons upon which he acted; and if he could get the House to go so far with him, he thought he should have done some service. He had been thirteen years in parliament, and at present he had very little intention of sitting in parliament again. He should therefore retire with the consideration of having done his right and duty, and concluding with that consideration, he moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the regulation and improvement of the state and condition of the negro and other slaves in the West India islands and plantations, under the dominion of his Majesty, his heirs and successors.

Mr. Serjeant *Adair* said, that concurring as he did in the principles and object of the honourable gentleman, the general plan he had proposed was attended with such unsurmountable obstacles as would induce him even in that stage to give it his decided opposition. He would not, however, like the honourable gentleman, impute improper motives to the conduct of any one, but would give him the credit of being guided by the purest views of humanity and justice; had his propositions been brought forward in a stage in which they could debate matters of regulation, or had they been advanced in a colonial assembly, he would reckon them well entitled to be supported and embraced. When he saw a motion, announced, purporting to be for improving the state of the negroes in the West Indies, he immediately felt himself called upon to abandon every engagement of pleasure or of business and to attend and give his aid to every plan that seemed calculated to effect its purpose, without involving any dangerous example. In his mind, however, nothing but complete and total abolition could succeed in producing that amelioration which it was the object of any partial plan of regulation to obtain. The ingenious arguments that had that night so ably been suggested in pursuance of this idea, convinced him the more that such a plan was attended with difficulties which no talents could surmount. He hoped that the great and radical measure from which it only could result, would not be laid out of sight, that it would never die, that it would never be abandoned till complete and final success was obtained. There were many of the points upon which he agreed entirely with the honourable gentleman. Property, marriage, freedom from the lash, and regulation of the traffic
on

on the coast of Africa; especially the three first he considered in themselves as extremely good, but he was afraid they were not to be effected by the means proposed. As to the article of property, he did not see well how it could be realised, an objection which the honourable gentleman himself had foreseen, without fixing the negro to the place where the property existed, and thus innovating in a very decisive manner upon the legal rights in slaves, of which masters at present were possessed. The state of the slaves was so involved with the system which prevailed, and with the rights arising out of it to the proprietors, that no partial remedy could operate with advantage. With regard to the two last, marriage and exemption from the whip, he would have heartily concurred in them, had the House been deliberating upon matters of regulation, and had the grand source of the evil been removed. As to the regulation of the trade on the coast of Africa, to that he could never agree. He could never assent to any modification, to any compromise, to any plan of regulation and of improvement, that would in any way seem to indicate a recognition of the principle itself, which had been reprobated and renounced by the House after the fullest examination, and by the most solemn resolutions. Nothing but complete abolition with him could ever be admitted as a proper remedy to any partial evil, or any satisfaction of the great object which the House had pursued. He did not mean to refute the arguments of the honourable gentleman. With regard to the rights of man, as they had been stated by the honourable gentleman, he was perfectly agreed. Upon the point of propagation, which he deduced as a conclusion, he was induced from the fact upon the subject to differ. The state of the slaves had not operated totally to defeat this object. But if all the advantages which should result from this propagation were not enjoyed, what an argument for the total abolition of the trade, and a complete prohibition of any new importation! So long as cultivation was cheaper from continued importation than from care and attention in rearing the children of the negroes, no pains would be taken to make the propagation answer the necessity. The principal reason however that induced him to give his negative to the present motion, was the impolicy of interfering in the internal regulations of the colonies. He did not oppose it as denying the right. It was a subject, that of the abstract right of the legislature, that he did not wish to agitate. He had not forgotten the evil that had arisen during the unfortunate American contest, from the discussions upon this right. It was better

to avoid all abstract reasonings on the right of the legislature to form regulations, and only to confine it to the immediate necessity of the case. He was unwilling, he said, to take up the intermediate points between general admission and negotiation of the right. As the regulations proposed were to have effect wholly within the colonies, he did not wish to drive them to the situation of the American colonies, and bring into question their separation from this country. It had been said that America was the asylum of liberty, and the sanctuary of the oppressed. He, however, considered this country as the true asylum of liberty, the only constitution under which it could safely repose. Ours was sanctioned by experience. That of America had not yet been stamped with this venerable seal. While abstract notions of government agitated men's minds, and had produced so much mischief, he was cautious of broaching any subject that might involve their discussion. It was admitted that the colonies were not represented here, and this was a consideration that should attach us more to a complete abolition. Then there would be no need to reconcile the jarring interests of the assemblies, or provoke any nice discussions. All that was to be done was to stop the supplies of negroes, and the evils complained of would cease of themselves. It was indeed true, that many of the islands were represented by their proprietors here; but it was not as proprietors of lands in the West Indies, but as inhabitants of this country. As well might it be argued, that because many persons from a neighbouring kingdom (Ireland) resided here, the British parliament might pass an act, disposing of the properties of any class of persons in that country as represented in the same manner. He thought therefore, that no point would be so obnoxious as that of apportioning the lands of the West-India proprietors, without their consent and without their being properly represented. As he was convinced that the plan could not be effectual, without a total abolition, and as it was so dangerous in its principle, he would give it his negative even in that stage.

Mr. Fox addressed the Speaker as follows: "The case which we have now before us is unquestionably of very considerable magnitude: I am still, however ready, when called upon, to give a decided opinion upon the subject, and to shew the reasons upon which that opinion is formed. Before entering upon the discussion of the question, it is impossible not to premise, that whatever be the result of the motion now introduced, the House and the public must feel themselves deeply indebted to his honourable friend for the information he gave them,

them, and the admirable display he had made of knowledge of real and true philosophy. His speech of this day must ever do honour to his ability and his humane intentions. It is undoubtedly a question attended with many and serious difficulties, and nothing of an extraneous nature ought, if possible, to be introduced, or enlarged upon; the attention ought not to be diverted from the main object immediately submitted to our decision. I cannot, however, refrain from taking notice of what has been said relative to this country or America, being the proper asylum where the friends of freedom may expect to find themselves secure from the encroachments of arbitrary power, and the miseries of unjust oppression. My honourable friend opposite to me has talked of the blessings of this free constitution, and the advantages resulting from it to those who live under it. Such things may have existed; but if I am to speak of our constitution as it now exists, if the retrograde movement which has commenced is suffered to continue, if the present system of government is to be persevered in, there is an end of all those blessings; we may go any where else in search of true liberty. Let us look back, Sir, to the year 1784; let us trace the progress of ministers at different periods, but let us particularly consider what has passed in the present session, and we must perceive such enormous alterations in this blessed constitution, that those who were formerly acquainted with it, could scarcely know it again. America is said to have a new and untried constitution; the observation may be just, but I cannot help thinking, that from the late wonderful innovations, the constitution of this country may practically be said to be, of a later date, than even that of America, or any other country whatever. Upon this, however, I shall not enlarge farther at present.

“As to the object of my honourable friend’s motion, it seems to be admitted, that the principles upon which it is supported are of the most desirable nature; so much indeed do I conceive this to be the case, that I think it unnecessary to argue upon the wisdom of them, considered in an abstract point of view. He has likewise admitted that the improvements he looks up to, must be of a gradual nature; and he has certainly hit upon the most solid and natural basis on which to build his future superstructure, when he proposes to commence his operations by establishing a system of property among the negroes. Independently, then, of the principles abstractedly considered, the chief questions seem to be, first, how far, in a prudential point of view, it is wise in my honourable friend to bring forward the proposition he has now done, as connected with

with, and introductory to the final abolition of the slave trade; and, secondly, what are the means by which he intends his principles to be carried into practice.

"My honourable and learned friend who spoke last, seemed to consider this as a debate upon the propriety of adopting the proposition now made to the House, or of deciding for a total abolition.—How happy should I feel were that actually the case, and with how little hesitation should I prefer a total abolition. I do not consider that my giving my vote one way or another this evening, is to be held to be an instance of my receding one step from the ground, which I have always taken on the question of the entire abolition of the slave trade. I have pledged myself to the House upon that point. Those honourable gentlemen who have been equally, if not more strenuous than myself in this cause, I do not presume have any intentions of abandoning it; but sure I am, that no session shall pass, while I have the honour of sitting in this House, without my exertions being employed to accelerate this desirable event. I, for one, am determined not to contribute to the increase or perpetuation of that stigma which must ever be attached to this House and to this country, while that abominable traffic is permitted to exist. If, Sir, we were at the beginning of a session, and there was any solid hope that an abolition was likely to take place, I would yield to the argument of my honourable and learned friend, but the Bill introduced for that purpose has been lost. I know not exactly, if the forms of the House admit of the introduction of another, for the accomplishment of the same object; or if they did, I see no certainty of better success.

"When I look forward, I see little rational ground of hope, particularly when I reflect upon the characters and situation of some who were in the minority on the late question. To say, that men of the greatest power and influence in the country, and of unquestionably great abilities, could throw little weight into the scale in the consideration of any question would indeed be ridiculous. What was actually the case? The question was introduced with the approbation and support of a minister who surely has neither less influence nor less personal talents than any of his predecessors, and yet the plan has failed. If this be so, when, where, how are we to procure success? The plan too, Sir, was defeated, contrary to a solemn decision of parliament; having disgraced themselves in this shameful manner, what right have I to hope that another occasion will soon be presented for the attainment of this desired object? What then does my honourable friend propose? That the

the House will not totally forget all these honourable, humane sentiments they have formerly uttered upon the occasion ; but that if they are not inclined to fulfil all they have promised, they will at least show a desire of doing something to give substance to their professions, and to prove that they were founded in sincerity.

“ I now come to consider the nature of the means by which my honourable friend proposes to carry his proposition into execution ; and upon this undoubtedly the whole difficulty rests. The right of taxation, and of general legislation, have, I conceive, been improperly confounded together. They are, to all intents and purposes, practically different. This difference was constantly acknowledged in the great question of American independence. The Americans never found fault with our legislative acts, until they involved the question of taxation. Lord Chatham, in a speech in this House, and I do honour to his memory for the sentiment, said, that he rejoiced in the resistance made by America, to every attempt to tax them, for the purposes of revenue ; and in the very same speech he added, (I do not say I go all that length with him) that he nevertheless would not permit any matter of commerce to take place, not even a hob-nail, to be made in America, without the sanction of the British legislature. I mention this chiefly to shew the distinction that has been made between legislative acts of the one kind and the other ; but in the American dispute there was a difference taken, not only between acts of general legislation and of taxation, but between acts of taxation for the purposes of internal regulation, and acts of taxation for the increase of the revenue. Acts of taxation for the regulation of the Post Office were quietly acquiesced in. It was only when we offered them the alternative to accept or refuse indiscriminately acts of every description passed by the British senate, that they discovered signs of serious resistance.

“ With respect to the West Indies, we have already renounced every right of taxation. My learned friend says, we have no right of this kind—so do I—but he says he is not ready to admit in what respects legislative acts of any other nature may be passed, and he has brought forward the case of Ireland as in point upon this question. The act passed fourteen years ago, put that matter right as to Ireland. In no instance could the difference between acts of legislation and taxation, be more clearly ascertained. I from this source drew my arguments during the American war. In every case of either external or internal regulation, the Irish were perfectly

umissive ; but if the bare intention of raising a tax for the purpose of revenue had gone abroad, it would infallibly have produced resistance. I must confess, at the same time, that to legislate for colonies, is at no time desirable ; it ought only to be done when necessity calls for it. How far is this the case at present ? I do not wish, it must be observed, upon the occasion, to repeat the mere letter of the law. My learned friend, and every other professional man, would certainly tell me, that a British statute was as much the law of Jamaica as the law of Middlesex ; but I am not fond of unnecessarily exercising this legislative authority over persons not actually represented, and where much injustice might arise for want of proper local information. We are, however, at present reduced to an unfortunate dilemma, and I am obliged to put this question to myself ‘ Whether it be better to make use of a partial remedy which may in some respects be exceptionable, or permit the evil in its full extent to continue ? ’ I have been accused of throwing out the threat of independence upon the subject of the West India islands. I do, in answer to that, most decidedly affirm, that if it were to become a question whether these islands should be connected with this country, and in consequence of that connexion, all the stigma attending the abominable system of slavery should be ignominiously continued, or that their compleat independence should take place, I should not have one doubt on the subject. I am by no means blind to the danger of such a separation. I desire it not, the separation would be painful, the danger great, but if the colonies were inclined to refuse their assent to so wise and humane a proposition as has now been made for the amelioration of the state of the slaves, I should not feel myself inclined to employ either armies or navies to reduce them to subjection, but would in the language of a gentleman, who, though not present, I cannot name as being a member of this House, desire them to “ go and be happy in their own way,” if happiness could be found by acting contrary to every principle of justice, policy, and humanity. If, however, it be acknowledged that the British parliament has the power of general legislation, and that it may in some cases of necessity be exercised, I ask, what case of greater necessity can be put, than a case which involves the character and honour of the British name ? I have occasionally said, that a war to preserve our honour is the only justifiable war. Even this principle, were it necessary, I should not find myself at a loss to support ; but if in any case a legislative act is demanded for the purposes of interest, policy, aggrandisement, or the increase of commerce,

are

are any such objects to be compared with that of removing the national dishonour, which must ever be connected with the support and continuance of this trade in any of its branches. I shall for these reasons unquestionably vote for the introduction of this Bill.

“ Were any person to give me a reasonable ground to hope that an abolition of the slave trade would speedily take place, were it held out to me that any other step would be taken towards our amelioration of the state of the slaves in the West Indies, were I to be told that a recommendation would come from the throne to effect the desirable purpose, I might perhaps be silent upon this occasion; but let me no longer hear of expectations from the acts of colonial assemblies! When I look at the internal code of laws under which the poor negroes languish, when I see they are not considered as men, and reflect one moment upon the penalties to which they are subjected, and the oppression under which they labour, I expect nothing from these assemblies, who give countenance to such proceedings.

“ It was urged as an argument by my learned friend, that the question of abolition to which he so heartily gives his assent, by no means involves the dispute on the right of legislation, but that every provision in that Bill comes within the acknowledged authority of this House; permit me, however, to say that the opposers of that Bill, and some of them high in authority, constantly held out as an argument of some weight, the opinion which those immediately upon the spot in the West Indies, or immediately connected with them might entertain upon the subject. This, therefore, is no fair ground for opposing my honourable friend's motion. As to the question of representation, the West Indies are not, properly speaking, represented in this House, nor is it practicable, perhaps, that they should be so; no more is Ireland, no more was America. As to their representation in the West Indies, it might be called a pure representation of property, in consequence of the number of blacks. But we ought, in this case, to consider the difference between a real and virtual representation, and the proportion which in this respect the West Indies bear to any other instance known in this country. Were we even to bring to our recollection the time when so many Irish landholders resided in this country, and held seats in this House, and when so much land in Ireland was under mortgage in this country, yet would that bear no proportion to the power and influence of West India proprietors at the present moment. A country may undoubtedly be virtually represented. I do not say it is

in every instance the best mode, but standing where I now do, I must acknowledge the fact; and surely if any country was ever virtually represented, it is the West Indies in this House. Does not every man hearing me feel, from the fate of the Bill for the abolition of the slave trade, that they are both virtually and powerfully represented in this House? In short, Sir, no case can appear to me to call in a more pressing manner upon the legislative authority of the British parliament, than the present, unless we consider as nugatory all we have ever heard, either from those who promote or oppose the abolition of the slave trade. Good God! Mr. Speaker, have we come to a solemn decision upon the subject, and yet pass year after year, without taking a single measure to carry our resolutions into execution? We are guilty of hypocrisy of the basest sort. I am constrained to vote for any measure of the kind proposed, in order to prove that there is yet some sincerity left in the House of Commons. I hoped that my learned friend, in opposing this motion, and with the anxiety which he expresses for a total abolition, would have thrown out some hope of such an event being likely to take place---but I am sorry to say, I see no such prospect at the present period. After what took place in the year 1792, and the subsequent flagrant breach of promise that has taken place, all assurances coming from this House must naturally be looked upon as vain and frivolous. At the same time I confess I even now think it would be something, were the House, during the present session, to come to some solemn resolution on the subject. I have already said, that a vote on this question must necessarily be given with some degree of difficulty; but I give mine clearly and conscientiously, because such a measure, with all the obstacles attending it, is less objectionable, and less contrary to humanity and justice, than doing nothing to alleviate those miseries which are at this moment attached to slavery in the West Indies. When an entire abolition of the trade was proposed in 1796, or were it now to be proposed at any fixed period, I should probably object to any regulations of an inferior nature; but the question of abolition is lost, and I have no option left. Is it indeed come to this, that the British parliament have refused to abolish the abominable traffic in human flesh, and the slaves in the islands are to be left to the humanity of the West India proprietors? If it were apparent from authentic documents that the colonial assemblies would pass those acts which humanity demands, or that an abolition of the trade would be effected by parliament, there would be no occasion for such a measure as the present; but if no such thing is likely to take place,

place, I find myself under the necessity of voting for the motion of my honourable friend."

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* said, that he did not go the length of saying, that no proposition with regard to the abolition could be entertained by the House this session. He thought that the House might take some step to fulfil the pledge they had given, and the reason why he himself was averse to take up the subject was, that he would not take it out of the hands of an honourable gentleman, who had prosecuted the subject with such humanity and perseverance, and whose abilities qualified him so well to conduct it.

Sir William Young affirmed, that throughout the islands there were religious congregations of negroes, and itinerant preachers in abundance. If gentlemen had travelled in the West Indies, as he had done, they would be more competent than they were to speak on the subject. The negroes were happier in general and more comfortable than the poor people of this country, which he could prove, were he disposed to make invidious distinctions. They were already allowed a piece of ground, which they cultivated as their own property. He was surprised that the honourable gentleman talked so lightly of giving away to each negro as much land as would here be a qualification to vote. Had the propositions of the honourable gentleman gone to effect any local remedies by an address to the throne, in order to be recommended to the colonial assemblies, he, as well as others, would have heartily concurred. Slaves had served in the war from real attachment to their masters, and not from the motives ascribed by the honourable gentleman. He mentioned the aristocracy that prevailed among slaves, and their propensity to domineer over one another, and expressed his surprize that the House could hearken to propositions, that went to interfere with the internal legislation of the islands, by taxing the landed property of the proprietors, and by giving the negroes their ground.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, as he had repeatedly delivered his sentiments at considerable length on the necessity of the abolition of the African slave trade, he would now briefly state his opinion on the motion before the House. He agreed that there were many ancient laws prevailed in several of the colonies; there was much, nevertheless, yet to be done to ameliorate the condition of the slaves. What had fallen from the honourable Baronet was a subject of some consolation, and he contemplated with serious satisfaction that these unfortunate people had experienced some benefit from the discussions which had taken place on the subject. But there was still
much

much to be done, and that could be only accomplished by a total abolition, as pressed with so much eloquence and justice by his learned friend. The system was fundamentally wrong, and no amelioration of the condition of the slaves in the West Indies, could remove his objection to that system, but he had sanguine hopes that parliament would persevere and complete what sound policy urged, and what it had so laudably begun. As the planters became more enlightened, they would find it their interest to soften the condition of the slaves, and he hoped that the spontaneous efforts of the planters would induce them to ameliorate their situations exclusive of what had been imposed upon them by the executive government of the country. The total abolition of the traffick in those unfortunate people, he concluded was the only act to be expected from the British House of Commons, and without this no local act of legislation he conceived would be of any material avail. His learned friend had pointed out the dangerous and mischievous tendency of endeavouring by any act of internal legislation, to attempt introducing principles of morality, or correcting their condition by interfering with the property of the planters. As long as a torrent of new negroes were poured into the islands, he maintained that every plan adopted must prove impolitic and inadequate to the end proposed.

No man would deny that many of the principles laid down by the honourable member, were founded in justice and humanity; it was laudable to instil into their minds morality; but all instructions were fruitless as long as new negroes were imported into the colonies; the old slaves were susceptible of instruction; such would however operate to little advantage, without the total abolition was made the first preliminary step to instruction. This was an opinion which he had long formed, and from which he would never depart, and it was strengthened, not only by the debate of that night, but by every discussion which had taken place on the subject, it ought therefore to induce the House to return to that opinion which it had solemnly recorded on its journals. The question, he was firmly persuaded, was only suspended, but he was clearly against passing any law for taxation in a British parliament, that would have in its operation a local application to every estate in the West India Colonies. In giving property to slaves, the question of taxation was effected, for what could be more substantial than such a disposal of the property of the planters, though taxation had been given, and it was dangerous to assume even the appearance of it, when so many evils might ensue.

sue. Taking away their property was a violation of representation also in its best and most valuable effect, that of practical security. He cautioned the House against stirring a question of such a delicate nature; it would only excite a spirit of opposition, and make a fruitless attempt to do that which might be done in a regular course by a liberal control of the law, by regulating the external trade of the country. The House had relinquished the power of altering the property of the negroes; it had given out of its hand the power of taxation in the colonies; therefore, if the stirring of any question was more dangerous and hazardous than another, it was that to which he had adverted. If parliament reserved its undoubted right to regulate every measure that relates to trade, it retained the power of abolishing the Slave Trade; why then not adopt the measure at once, without involving it in innumerable difficulties, by attempting to interfere with the local legislation of the colonies? In this view of the question, and admitting what he did as to the principle of internal improvement, he felt no difficulty in saying, that consistent with the end he proposed, in finally abolishing the African Slave Trade, that he was bound to give his negative to the present motion. He begged leave to say, with regard to what had been urged, and urged truly of the necessity of the House not deserting its own pledge, that no man felt more strongly than he did the propriety of the observation: but how did it apply in the present business? In his opinion, that pledge was not secured to the public by the present motion, because the Bill of the honourable gentleman was totally distinct from the measures of an abolition. So far he could not countenance the motion; if the Bill was even passed, it would not go a step further to redeem that solemn pledge of parliament. He could not avoid pressing another observation on the notice of gentlemen; which was, when he considered the very small majority by which the motion of his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce) was lately lost, and he contemplated the large majority who supported the Abolition on other occasions; he had the most sanguine hopes that parliament, by coming hereafter to a similar vote, would maintain its honour and preserve its consistency.

The *Secretary at War* said, he was fully convinced that all parties in that House sincerely and unanimously wished to ameliorate the condition of the slaves in the West Indies; every plan that went to that effect would always meet with his concurrence. His honourable friend, in adverting to the plan proposed by his right honourable friend (Mr. Burke) said,

said, he abandoned that plan, because he was incapable of embracing the subject on the large scale on which he had viewed it. This certainly was sufficient cause for him not to have attempted a task to which his honourable friend acknowledged he was not competent. He was, however, so far a friend to the plan proposed, inasmuch as it embraced much of that of (Mr Burke) whose genius and talents are so eminently qualified for maturing a plan on a subject of this nature and magnitude. He did not think that if they were to proceed on the plan proposed by his honourable friend, there would be any determined opposition from the planters; if there was, it would arise principally from a question that had been touched upon relative to the power of this country to legislate in all matters for her colonies, a question which he agreed with his honourable friend ought not to be agitated at all, except in cases of absolute necessity, and then only as far as the immediate exigency of the case required. He wished those who were so cautious of venturing on that discussion now, had been as much so on other parts of the question, particularly the total abolition. He had great and sanguine hopes that much in the way of amelioration would be done by the colonies themselves, and he did not despair but by their exertions, and such plans as that now proposed, the Slave Trade would be abolished without any danger or discontent in any shape whatever; from this idea it was that he preferred the present and similar regulations, even to an immediate Abolition. He could never agree with those who said they would have no compromise on this subject; what had they been doing ever since the question was first agitated, but compromising in some way or other, from time to time, as they went on. In consequence of the regulations that had been made, much amelioration had taken place, and that gradual system was, in his mind, the best and most certain way of finally effecting an Abolition. From what they had already seen, it was fair to conclude, that slavery would be abolished by the West Indians themselves, and equally so to believe that in the same proportion as it was discontinued by them, the barbarism of the Africans would lessen. He concluded by wishing that the Bill might be brought in.

Mr. *Esse* said, as a subject of the country, and a member of parliament, he must give his decided negative to the plan proposed by the honourable gentleman, as tending to the rapid separation of the colonies from this country. The agitation of the question of legislating for the colonies was dangerous in the extreme; the House should recollect the conclusion of

the

the contest with America which was sealed with blood; he entreated the House to profit by that example; it would be in fact drawing the sword against the colonies, to attempt, by an act of the British legislature, to tax the islands. A distinction had been attempted to be made between taxation and legislation, but he could not allow that in this question they could be separated.

Mr. *W. Smith* said, that he could not give a silent vote on this motion, because he thought it necessary to give his reasons for the vote he meant to give. He agreed with all those who were decidedly for a total and immediate abolition; at the same time he must say, that whilst that could not be obtained, every measure that could possibly tend in any degree to come nearer to that effect, or to ameliorate in any way the condition of those unfortunate beings, who suffered so much from this unjust, inhuman, and murderous traffic of man-stealing, would meet with every support that he could give, and such epithets he always would apply to a trade that never could be mentioned by any British subject but with the greatest abhorrence. Mr. Smith expressed a wish to dwell but shortly on the different topics that had been introduced into the debate, he thought it necessary however to say something on one particular and essential point, and that was the argument used by many gentlemen, that much might be expected from colonial legislation; and, in supporting this argument, they had doubted, and in some degree contradicted, what had been said of colonial legislation by his two honourable friends behind him. In justice to them and to truth, he must call the attention of the House to the laws of those islands, and then ask the House, what they had to expect in fairness from the legislators? For this purpose it became necessary for the honourable gentleman to read the laws of the different islands for the management of their negroes. He took those of the latest dates on each island, mostly all in 1788, and pointed out their absurdity, cruelty, and injustice. After much pertinent reasoning, he concluded by giving his vote for his honourable friend's motion.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said he did not intend to follow gentlemen on the general question of the abolition of the slave trade, which had been too much introduced into the debate. When he heard gentlemen talking about the House having disgraced itself by departing from what they had before pledged themselves to, he would remark that he thought such language was very disrespectful to the House, and not at all warranted by any thing that had been done. In short it was no more

than a strong way which some people had of stating their own opinions, without any regard to the opinions of others, as able, as wise, and not less just and humane than themselves. With regard to the question itself, he would repeat what he had stated before, that unless you have the concurrence of the colonies themselves, all that you can do in the way of internal regulation is not worth a straw. The honourable gentleman had opened his speech by desiring the House not to anticipate any of his conclusions before he stated them, and if he was rightly informed, he had been so cautious to conceal his intentions by this motion, that he had not even made them known to his own confidential friends. This caution that nobody should know what he meant to bring forward, had been very useful to him; thus far, at least, it had secured him a patient hearing. If he had at first stated that his proposition went to the subversion of all colonial laws, property, and rights, that it could be productive of no one good purpose, and was only meant to produce an immediate and dangerous quarrel between this country and her colonies, certainly he would not have been suffered to bring forward any such proposition. He was therefore right to keep every body so much in the dark. He agreed in the general opinion that the question of right to legislate ought not to be agitated, except in cases of necessity, and he would venture to say that the Bill, if passed into a law, could produce no good, but would be extremely dangerous in its consequences, by opposing to the complaints already made in your colonies a question of doubtful legislation. He contended that the object of the proposed Bill went directly to taxation of all colonial property, real and personal, and could be brought forward for no other purpose but that of creating dispute. Some gentlemen had asserted, very idly in his opinion, that if this alternative was put, whether will you lose the West India islands, or abolish the slave trade? — they certainly would do the latter at the expence of the former. But in fact there could be no such alternative, if they were quit of the West Indies to-morrow, they would be no ways nearer the abolition of the slave trade. Much abuse had been thrown out against colonial legislation: their laws certainly were not all to be vindicated; but in them, as in every thing else, they had been gradually improving, and might still be expected to improve. Neither should matters in general be judged of by their most exceptionable parts: if they were to look at the statute books of this country, many laws equally bad would be found to stain their pages. Besides, while they were abusing colonial legislation, they ought

ought to reflect that they were abusing the king and council, for these laws had all been assented to in this country. He was surprised to hear gentlemen talk of agreeing to no compromise, and wished to know how they would act when the Bill for regulating the middle passage would be before them. Would they resist it, with all the advantages obtained for the comfort of the negroes, merely because they had not carried the total abolition? He did not suppose they would. But feeling himself to get more into length than he wished or intended, he concluded by giving his decided negative to the motion.

Mr. Robinson said, he wished the motion intended for the discussion of the West India expedition (alluding to Mr. Sheridan's notice) had preceded that which had been introduced on the present occasion. The maintenance of these islands in the possession of Great Britain should be the object of the contemplation of its parliament, and any mode of regulation, till the great point of their security was established, was irritating or nugatory at best, unless some considerable exertion was made, and in the manner the most expeditious imaginable. He trembled to think of the desperate state they were likely to be reduced to with respect to their dependence on this country; of the learned Serjeant who had taken an early part in the debate, he spoke in terms of the highest commendation. A lawyer of eminent talents and dignified character in his profession, quitting its pursuits to attend to the exigencies of his country and arrange himself on the side of her constitutional and essential interests, afforded a brilliant example for the imitation of his learned colleagues, and marked him out as a signal benefactor to that state in whose cause so noble an exertion had been manifested. The principles inculcated in his excellent speech commanded the perfect acquiescence of the honourable member, the idea of enforcing taxation on the colonies was dangerous in the extreme, and he hoped would never again be attempted; at the same time he was not prepared to condemn the principle which dictated the motion now adduced before the House. In consequence of its introduction laws framed, and lately framed in Jamaica and other islands under the British government had been developed, laws sanguinary and oppressive beyond what he could have conceived the existence of in a civilized country; after the horror excited by their communication, he could not but think some admonition was requisite to impress on the minds of the West India planters the necessity of obviating the dreadful consequence (to themselves as well as their dependants) that

must be the result of the continuance of a system so revolting to humanity; and he trusted that gentlemen who were proprietors of our valuable possessions in that part of the world, would no longer suffer such abominable abuses to pass current under the sacred names of law and justice. It was not without astonishment he had heard from a right honourable Secretary a confession of his having given his assent to them as a privy counsellor in this country; such conduct could admit of no other excuse than the being unacquainted with those laws to which he had made himself a party; and what a miserable defence was that for a man high in office, to confess he had neglected the duties of his situation. No man was justified in setting his hand to a paper of the contents which he was ignorant, and the right honourable gentleman was reprehensible for his negligence, in proportion to the mischievous tendency of that perversion of legal authority, he had contributed in giving a sanction to.

Mr. *Manning* contended that the regulations adopted by the colonial assembly of the island of Jamaica in the Consolidated Act passed in 1792, which were most advantageously framed for the happiness of the negroes, were, in themselves, sufficient to prevent the measures proposed by the honourable gentleman in his intended Bill. If, therefore, the honourable gentleman had recourse to that act, he would find that the greatest attention had been particularly given to the rearing of children; and though he did not positively assert that the measures had been adopted in all the other islands, yet he had every right to infer, that they had been equally attentive to promote the happiness of their negroes.

Mr. *W. Smith* explained.

Mr. *Francis*, in reply, observed, that if the declarations which had been so frequently and so strongly made by those gentlemen who opposed his motion in favour of the slaves, had been attended to by themselves, he should not that night have brought forward his motion. He apprehended, both from the result of a former debate, and the probable event of that night, that nothing effectual would be adopted for the relief of the unhappy men whose miserable situation was submitted to the judgment of the House. The right honourable gentleman confounded the object and means, but if he refused the means, he should at least give no opposition to the object, and he was at liberty to pursue it after his own method. It had been urged, that the Bill which he proposed to introduce went to renounce the right of taxing the colonies; but he positively denied that it could bear such a construction. Mr. *Francis*

concluded

concluded by saying, that he would not press a division on this motion, but hoped that gentlemen would come forward themselves, and propose measures to alleviate the distresses of the slaves. The motion was then put and negatived without a division.

Mr. *Wm. Smith* moved, "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he may be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before the House copies of the several Acts relating to the regulation, &c. &c. of slaves, passed by the different colonial assemblies since the year 1788."

Mr. *Fox* desired to be informed by the right honourable gentleman (Mr. *Dundas*) who had declared his opinion, that the slave trade should be confined to slaves under a certain age, whether he meant that such a limitation should be carried into effect by the parliament of this country, or by the colonial assemblies? He also wished to be acquainted, whether it was the right honourable gentleman's intention, in consequence of that opinion, to bring forward any motion of that nature?

Mr. *Dundas* replied, that he certainly could not think of proposing such a measure at a moment when the country was involved in war. Were he to do so, he might be justly charged with inconsistency.

Mr. *Smith's* motion was agreed to.
Adjourned at twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, April 12.

Heard counsel in an Appeal from the Court of Chancery, Lord *Albemarle* *versus* *Rogers*.

Received a number of Bills from the Commons, which were read a first time.

The second reading of the personal succession tax Bill was postponed till Thursday the 14th.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* said, that as this was a tax novel in its nature, and involved principles of the greatest importance, he would move their Lordships to be summoned on that day.

Heard counsel, and examined evidence on *Moorfom's* divorce, after which the Bill was read a second time.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, April 12.

The *Lord Mayor* presented a petition from a body of the city brewers, in favour of the publicans Bill, to prevent the purloining of pewter pots. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. *Rose* moved an address to his Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to give directions for furnishing the House with an account of monies issued in pursuance of addresses up to the 4th of December, 1795, which had not been made good by parliament.

Mr. *Rose* also signified his intention of moving for a committee of the House to consider of permitting the importation of melasses in the ships of states at amity with this country.

MISDEMEANOUR COSTS BILL.

Mr. *Heniker Major* moved the second reading of the Bill for granting costs in cases of misdemeanours, as the law now stands in cases of felony, &c. The Bill being read a second time, after a few prefatory words on the general utility of such a measure, he observed, that he wished to submit it to the consideration of a select committee, previous to its being considered by a committee of the whole House.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* seconded him in his proposition; on which the Bill was referred to a select committee.

EXPIRING AND EXPIRED LAWS.

Mr. *Abbott* rose, to make a motion respecting the state of our temporary laws; of which he had before given notice. He prefaced it by a short view of the advantages that would arise from having a clear distinct register of the expiring and expired laws regularly submitted to the House. A statement of this kind was annually brought forward; that, however, was much short of what it ought to be; he wished, therefore, to extend the plan, so as to embrace all temporary laws. One of his objects was, to obviate the evil that might arise from the expiration of a temporary law still supposed to exist. The regular digest which he wanted, would operate as an effectual remedy against such accidental mistakes. The legislature might, by this means, always have a criterion to direct them in similar cases; and be better enabled to judge in many doubtful cases, on which the wisdom of our ancestors had already decided. This digest would contain a fund of experimental policy; and obsolete statutes might if necessary be revived with such alterations as times and circumstances should require.

quire. Though he was aware that the collecting such a digest would be a matter of some labour, he hoped it might be soon prepared. Mr. Abbott concluded with moving for a committee to inspect and consider the state of the recently expiring and expired laws, and to report a statement of them to the House, mentioning the occasions on which they were enacted; also a statement of all expiring and expired laws whatever, describing each by its title, chapter, and sections, and mentioning its duration, together with the comments and observations of the committee on the same.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* rose to second the motion, and to thank the honourable gentleman for having introduced so wise and expedient a proposition. For want of such a regular digest, not merely trifling mistakes, but serious evils were often incurred, as from the voluminous complexion of the statute book of this country, there was even danger, lest gentlemen bred to the profession of law, might, from haste and the exigency of the moment, adopt judgments neither proper nor salutary. Such a digest was much wanted in the distribution of criminal justice; he himself could mention cases where there had been great escapes from running into irreparable errors and evils in decisions of that nature. It was true this mischief was a good deal checked and prevented, by the ability and integrity of our judges. It must, nevertheless, appear evident to all men, that the utmost precision was necessary to ascertain the several obligations and various relations of our national and commercial interests. Nothing was likely to assist this so well as a digest, which would, at one view, give an abstract of all the temporary regulations which had been adopted, and their provisions and principles. Such a measure could not fail of doing much public good. In parliament, it would furnish a fund of experience, shewing and explaining the several laws which had been enacted on the spur of occasion. And thus there might be experiments ready for all circumstances to direct the judgments of gentlemen, shewing what laws ought to be preserved or repealed. It would also guide the House in making them careful not to continue penal measures, resorted to in times and circumstances of danger, longer than the exigency demanded. Lastly, such a regulation would widely diffuse a knowledge of the laws, and more immediately instruct legislators: as gentlemen had no direct means of acquiring a knowledge of laws which had expired, there being no regular access to such parliamentary records.

The

The motion was agreed to *nem. con.* and the Committee ordered accordingly.

Mr. Sheridan said, that he would on some future day move for the production of the papers he wanted preparatory to his intended motion respecting the war in the West India islands. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, *April 13.*

Read the Bills on the table.

The papers moved for by the *Earl of Lauderdale* on a former day, were laid on the table.

Heard counsel, and examined evidence on *Briscoe's* divorce Bill.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *April 13.*

The Scotch Game Bill was read a third time and passed.

CUTTING BUTCHERS PETITION.

Mr. Mainwaring called the attention of the House to this petition, which appeared to him of the utmost importance, particularly at this juncture. Notwithstanding the unprecedented dearth of meat, he said, there was nothing like a scarcity in that article; on the contrary, the markets were never better supplied, either as to the number or the quality of the cattle: The dearth of meat was to be attributed to another cause, viz. the intervention of *middle-men* between the grazier and the butcher. It was well known that these men had it in their power to raise the price of meat just as they please and it was equally well known that many had contrived, within a very short time indeed, to amass immense fortunes by their speculations. Under these circumstances he hoped the House would feel the propriety of according with the motion he should make, which was, "That the petition be referred to a committee to consider and report their opinion upon the same."

General Smith said, he had no idea that this evil had arisen to such an alarming height, until he heard what had fallen from the worthy magistrate, to whom, for his exertions upon this occasion, the public were much indebted. The case appeared to him to call for immediate consideration, and some legislative

legislative remedy. He should, therefore, give every possible support to the motion.

Mr. *Lechmere* rose to express his great satisfaction at the conduct and exertions of the worthy magistrate, who had brought forward the petition. Amongst various pernicious monopolies, he considered one of the most dangerous to be that of meat. It was a grievance carried to a great length, and such as required the interference of the legislature. He understood that the jobbers went to the distance of two hundred miles to meet droves of cattle coming to the London market, and that such cattle went through five or six different hands before they got to Smithfield, which served to enhance the price of meat, so that the poor were prevented from purchasing it after their daily labour was over.

The petition was referred to a committee.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the propriety of allowing the importation of melasses.

Mr. *Rose* moved the following resolutions, which were agreed to, and ordered to be reported to the House next day.

Mr. *Rose* moved, that there be laid before the House an account of all the monies issued by order of his Majesty since the 4th of December last, to Duncan Campbell and James Bradley, Esquires, for services done to government, and which have not been made good by parliament. Ordered.

WEST-INDIA EXPEDITION.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, that he had come down to move for certain papers relative to the West India expedition. He was encouraged to think that they would not be refused, when he recollected the desire which had been expressed at a former period for a full and impartial inquiry into the subject. If the prospect of peace had been nearer than at present it appeared to be, it might be said that such an enquiry would be instituted with greater propriety after the re-establishment of tranquility; but in the prospect of continuing in the same calamitous course in which we had hitherto proceeded, and under the same weak and blundering councils by which the war had been guided, an inquiry into past errors became more than ever necessary. He was surprised to find, since he came to the House, that the King's ministers had any objection to the production of these papers. He should, however, move that they be laid before the House; and if they were refused, he would name a future day for the discussion. Mr. *Sheridan* then moved for a long string of papers relative to the West India expedition; amongst which were

An account of the number of men sent out to the West Indies, under Sir Charles Grey in the close of the year 1793.

An account of the number of men drawn from this expedition, and placed under the command of Lord Moira.

An account of the number of men taken from Sir Charles Grey, after the conquest of Martinique and Guadaloupe, and sent to St. Domingo.

A return of the reinforcements sent out to St. Domingo, with the dates of their sailing and of their arrival.

A copy of all the letters which were written by Admiral Christian and General Abercrombie, respecting the delay of the West India expedition.

An account of the mortality of the troops laying on board the transports while they remained at Portsmouth.

An account of the number of ships foundered, and of the men that were lost after they had sailed.

And a copy of the letter for the appointment of a board to superintend the transport service.

Mr. Dundas said, that no consent to the production of these papers could have been previously intimated, as the honourable gentleman had never stated specifically what papers he wanted. With respect to many of the papers now mentioned, they appeared to him unfit to be produced, because the public service was not to be sacrificed to any wish he might have for an inquiry. He wished for some time to examine the motion of the honourable gentleman, and to consider whether the papers could be produced consistently with the public service.

Mr. Fox said, that unless ministers would afford proper information to the House, it was useless to talk of inquiries, because they could answer no purpose. He admitted, however, that there were many cases, in which a minister could not, consistently with his duty to the public, produce papers which were called for without previous consideration.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, the honourable gentleman who brought forward the motion, had yesterday certainly written down for him the nature of the papers he meant to move for; it did not, however, contain one tenth part of the papers which he had just moved for; but even on that imperfect statement which the honourable gentleman had shewn him, he had objected to some of them. There was much of the honourable gentleman's usual candour in the whole of this transaction; he had given several months general, and some weeks specific, notice of his motion; on the very day before it was to come on, he came down to move for papers; and when asked about the nature of the papers he required,

quired, he gave a statement, not containing one-tenth of the papers he wanted.

Mr. *Sheridan* admitted, that he had not given an exact account of the papers he wanted, and declared that he only meant to give a sketch of them. He consented to postpone this motion, which was read, and it was agreed that the debate arising upon it, should be adjourned till the next day week.

MONS. SOMBRIEUL'S LETTER.

General Tarleton moved, that there be laid before the House a copy of the letter, dated from Portsmouth or Plymouth, written by the Count de Sombrieul, and addressed to the right honourable William Windham, Secretary at War, referred to in M. Sombrieul's letter to Sir J. B. Warren.

The *Secretary at War* said, he lamented that the present motion had anticipated his intention of giving the wished for intimation to the House. It had been his full intention to bring forward the paper moved for, as soon as he knew it was in his power; he was happy therefore to have this opportunity of explaining himself upon a subject, the particulars of which he wished much to communicate to the House. When this subject of the Quiberon expedition was first mentioned, he was called upon to produce that letter, though he was convinced that the gentleman who thus called upon him, knew well that it was not in his power. The letter was written from Portsmouth, and addressed to him, and was alluded to in another letter from the Count de Sombrieul, to Sir John Warren, which had been published at his desire, and in which M. de Sombrieul expressed a wish that his letter to him (Mr. Windham) should be made public. It gave him much uneasiness that it could not be found; he had even a remote recollection that he had destroyed it. However, he perfectly recollected, that it did not contain an iota of the important matter stated by gentlemen; for his own satisfaction and justification, it became highly important to him if possible to produce it. In this idea he searched for it; and while he was so engaged, a gentleman in his office, (Mr. Lewis), through whose hands the letter passed, confirmed him in his recollection that it contained nothing of what was alluded to. The one and the only letter which he received from Monsieur S. was more of a private than public nature; it merely expressed that gentleman's high sense of honour and duty; and his determination to sacrifice every thing in the cause in which he was engaged. Sure, he was, that it did not contain one word respecting the nature of the expedition, of the command of the army, or any government secrets. After much time and trouble in enquiry

after it, the letter was found in the hands of Colonel Ramsay.

He pledged himself to produce it; and the production of it would confirm what he declared concerning it. It would appear that it was not at all of an official nature, and hardly could be produced with propriety, if the necessity of the case, when such stress was laid on it, did not supersede matters of privacy and propriety. It had been urged against him that he wished to withhold it, and would not do what he ought in justice to the memory of that gallant officer. Such, however, was not the opinion of that brave man, who consigned to his care his last requests and his private papers, although his acquaintance with that gallant and accomplished person had not been of very long standing. He was glad, at the same time, that the contents would fully justify him in refusing the motion; that he had it now in his power to meet that blame, which gentlemen imputed to him; and he assured the honourable gentleman, that, had he even been silent on the subject, he would himself have taken some opportunity of communicating the letter to the House. The manner in which he had been attacked was unhandsome: Since it was all along known to gentlemen that the letter itself was missing, but that circumstance perhaps made them more pressing and clamorous about it.

With regard to the general subject of the expedition, since, for what reasons he knew not, it was customary to refer to him upon it, he was ready to stand any share of censure that might be imputed to it. Public reasons might render it necessary to resist any inquiry that might be demanded on the subject, and he foresaw the sarcasms that a negative upon any inquiry would give rise to; in the discharge of official and public duties however, it was necessary to overlook attacks of such a nature.

Mr. Fox said, he had mentioned the subject of Sombrioul's letter at the beginning of the session, he could assure the house however upon his honour, as a gentleman, that he was not aware that it was missing; it was only a few days, at least he could say weeks, since he had heard of that circumstance. He was glad to find, however, that the right honourable gentleman himself had considered the subject in the same way in which it had been felt by the side of the House from which he spoke, as a call of honour upon him to produce the letter which was required in so interesting a manner by Sombrioul; and it was natural that some strictures should be passed upon its not appearing. He did not deny that it was sometimes necessary to resist inquiry; that this necessity had occurred so often to the present ministers was, however, somewhat extraordinary.

Were

Were he in such a situation he should at least feel the propriety of not vauntingly provoking inquiry which it was determined to resist, and he thought the honourable gentleman and his colleagues might perform their duty equally well if they did not so often recel to the recollection of the House the sacrifice of inclination which it required. Such modesty would be more becoming than the lofty language ministers held while in pursuance of what they called public duty, they were resolved to quash every inquiry.

General Tarleton read extracts from the letter of Monsieur Sombrieul to Sir J. B. Warren, in which he expressed a wish that Mr. Windham would publish his letter. General Tarleton here observed, that the letter was purported to be sent to Mr. Windham from Plymouth; and he thought it was not the letter which Mr. Windham had just before mentioned.

The *Secretary at War* replied, that he received no letter from Mons. Sombrieul from Plymouth; the one he had was from Portsmouth: consequently, the letter which had been alluded to must be intercepted, or Mons. Sombrieul had made a mistake, from agitation at the moment.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, as the honourable gentleman seemed determined to persist notwithstanding his honourable friend had explicitly declared that he had no wish to withhold the letter, he would move the order of the day.

Mr. *Sheridan* remarked, that it was probable the letter adverted to might be written from Portsmouth, and that the mistake was owing to Count Sombrieul; but certainly the Count, from the tenor of the letter, as stated by the right honourable gentleman, must consider it necessary to be made public, in vindication of his honour, and to exculpate him from any blame with respect to the unfortunate expedition to Quiberon. That the Count so regarded the letter, evidently appeared from his sentiments contained in that sent to Sir John Warren. The production of this paper was so far necessary, as the Count had asserted, that the French prisoners with whom he embarked, and who were employed by government, were bribed to betray him. If that were the case, surely it were proper to inquire how far his Majesty's Ministers were implicated in the conduct of that unfortunate and melancholy expedition.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* reminded the House, that the first time the letter was mentioned, he put in his claim, that he was not bound to submit to an extensive inquiry into that affair, without sufficient ground was shewn why such inquiry should be instituted.

Mr. *Fox* said, if ministers were determined to resist all inquiry,

quiry, because, in their mind, it was not consistent with their public duty, they certainly ought not to arrogate to themselves the praise of acquittal, at the same time that they refused to submit to investigation. He acquitted the right honourable gentleman from any wish to conceal the letter of the Count Sombrioul; on the face of the business, however, it was absurd to say, that the Count had not attached considerable blame to some quarter, as far as related to the unfortunate expedition in question.

The *Secretary at War* declared, that the letter not being of an official nature when it was first mentioned, it did not make that impression on his mind which could alone enable him to state what he had already mentioned, and which he was enabled to do more fully from a subsequent perusal. The Count de Sombrioul had not been more than three or four days in the country when the letter was written from Portsmouth, and could not be supposed to possess all that information which the right honourable gentleman imagined. He would not however proceed further in the business at present, but reserved himself until it should be more fully discussed.

After a few words from *General Tarleton*, the House passed to the order of the day.

PEWTER POTS.

Mr. *Fox* moved the order of the day, that the Bill to prevent the purloining of Pewter Pots be read a second time.

Mr. *Dent* objected to the Bill, on the grounds which he had formerly stated. The clause; which obliged publicans to bring their liquor in gallons to the houses of their customers, would be attended with infinite inconvenience, particularly to the industrious poor, who would be induced to go to the house of the publican and spend their week's wages, because they had not conveniences to drink their porter in at home.

Mr. *Fox* said, that this was not a new law, a Bill of this nature passed in the reign of George the first, and was not attended with the inconveniences stated. The loss of the publicans was enormous, occasioned by the purloining of pewter pots, and amounted from 5000*l.* to 6000*l.* annually. The House could not suppose that they submitted patiently to have their property stolen. It was certainly protected, like all other species of property, by the law, but during the years 1793, 1794, and 1795, there had been no less than two hundred and fifty-three persons tried for the stealing of pewter pots, nineteen out of twenty were convicted. He had no desire, nor had

had the publicans, to have the laws of punishment extended ; in a moral point of view however he was of opinion that the temptation should be removed, which temptation was provided against in the Bill. Private arrangements to put a stop to the evil had been attempted among the publicans, and had failed. In fact the publicans were not that class of men who see things in an enlightened point of view, and certainly many of them would from motives of immediate personal advantage destroy any arrangement which might be made, by entering into an agreement not to serve such persons as would not provide their own vessels ; it was therefore necessary, that an Act of the legislature should interpose, to prevent the evil of which they complained.

Mr. *Lechmere* said that the publicans in proposing this measure were not actuated by a desire to spare their own trouble, for they would willingly carry their porter to private houses, if individuals would find pots or jugs. He had heard an objection stated, that this Bill would injure the trade of the pewterers ; but he understood that the pewterers themselves were not against this Bill. The plunderers, many of them, steal these pots and melt them down to prevent discovery ; the theft was easy, and the conviction difficult, and often rendered impossible. The losses sustained by the publicans were enormous. It had been stated that in the parish of Mary-le-bonne they had lost in one year, through such thefts, 3158*l.* in another parish, 4161*l.* in St. Giles's, 1798*l.* One publican had stated his annual expence for pots stolen to be 66*l.* or 68*l.* another 25*l.* To prevent such frauds, he thought the Bill necessary.

The strangers were requested to withdraw, and the House divided on the order of the day.

<i>Ayes</i>	-	-	31
<i>Noes</i>	-	-	9

<i>Majority</i>	22
-----------------	----

On the question being put, that the Bill be read a second time, the House was counted out, there not being forty members present. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, April 14.

Heard counsel in the Scotch Appeal, *Stein v. Stewart*, and others. Further hearing adjourned.

Lord

COLLATERAL SUCCESSION BILL.

Lord Grenville moved the second reading of the Collateral Succession Bill.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* rose to express his astonishment, that when a measure of so extraordinary a nature, at once so important and so novel, involving consequences of the most serious kind was introduced into that House, the noble Secretary should not think it necessary to say one single word upon the principle of it: that he should, in a manner, insult the House, by not condescending to give them any explanation upon this subject; but trusting confidently to his majorities, conceived it quite sufficient to give his measure a name, in order to procure the implicit acquiescence of the House.

Lord Viscount Sydney spoke to order. The noble Earl, he said, had no right to call upon any noble lord to rise and speak, whether the noble Earl thought proper or not; and it was insulting to the House to talk of a majority, as if their lordships were merely the creatures of a minister and were to act at his bidding. No peer was entitled to animadvert, as had been now done, on the motives which might induce any of them either to speak or be silent upon a question.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* said, he knew what he owed to the House, himself, and others too well, and was conscious that he owed the House too much gratitude for the indulgence they always shewed him, either to expect that he was entitled to call upon any individual peer to speak or not, much more to mean to insult the House. He had no right to do either, but he knew what he had right to do perfectly well; he had a right to give his opinion of the taciturnity of any minister, or peer of parliament in a particular situation, and to call for some explanation when a Bill of a nature so novel, so extraordinary, and so complicated was introduced into the House. This extraordinary Bill seemed to be treated more like a turnpike Bill, than one which affected the property of the whole kingdom, in a manner totally unprecedented. Other Bills for the purposes of taxation which had passed during the present session, were such, as when circumstances unfortunately demanded taxes, had usually been resorted to as the proper objects of taxation. Fifteen hundred thousand pounds of taxes had been raised chiefly upon the same principle, if not actually the same taxes as had been dropped during the peace. They had been laid upon articles of consumption, upon the unproductive property of the kingdom; until the present measure was introduced, no attempt however had ever been made directly

directly to tax the whole capital of the nation. It appeared to him of that nature in its consequences, that when coupled with another Bill lately opened in the other House (the Landed Property Bill) which the Votes of the House of Commons then upon their lordships table, shewed, it went not only to sweep all the property of the kingdom into the hands of the government, but much more to affect the fortunes of their lordships successors than any other set of men whatever. Were not ministers satisfied with the enormous mass of property and influence they already enjoyed under the present mode of collecting the revenue, but must they endeavour to break down all those estates which might not be continued in the particular line pointed out by them? It tended to reduce to beggary, and consequently to dependence, many respectable families. And as he had just observed, the effect would be still greater upon the members of that House, than upon other parts of the community. When members of the House of Commons died John, or James was perfectly competent to succeed and become a member of the representative body; it was of little importance which was the successor; persons proper to fill the situation of representatives, might always be found, but in a House of hereditary members, the effect of the Bill would be extremely different. By the operation of the tax it would in process of time totally annihilate and swallow up the fortunes of their lordships collateral heirs, who might succeed to their titles; thus the individuals of that House would, in a given time, be reduced to beggary, the dignity and independence of the House of Peers, as a branch of the constitution, would therefore be gone for ever. Had such a tax subsisted during the last century, not one of their lordships would at present have possessed property enough to support their rank and their character. Even the most affluent and the most noble would have been reduced to indigence. To shew what it would do even upon the most wealthy families, in the case of the Duke of Norfolk for instance, whom it was no irregularity to name, as he was not present, if the Bill had passed about the middle of the last century, no less a sum than 600,000*l.* would have been taken by this time from the fortune of that noble family, the estates of which would have been mortgaged to that extent. It was in fact a species of Agrarian law, melting down every little piece of property to swell the enormous mass of the public revenue.

The minister might wish to level and to destroy every barrier that existed to oppose the encroachments of power or the measures of government. In the way of influence it was

complete and decisive. He was aware that the principle of the Bill was already recognized, and that two Bills had sometime since passed imposing a tax on legacies, but it was never dreamt of that ministers would extend the principle so far as to give themselves a power of seizing the whole capital of the kingdom, and thus impoverish noble lords till they reduced them to a state in which they were more likely to become the convenient tools, and the servile supporters of the measures of the minister. They would have neither independence to withstand, nor influence to check his designs. Nothing would be left to make head against that influence which was already too powerful.

Many parts of this Bill, although it would be more regular to discuss them minutely in the Committee, were so intimately connected with the principle of the Bill, that he should take the liberty of noticing them. The tax was, as he had stated, a tax on the capital of the country which was a most enormous and alarming idea, and coupled with the other Bill to which he had alluded amounted to an attempt to seize into their own hands the whole stock of the country, personal and landed property, on all legacies given by way of annuities indiscriminately, without the least equitable regard to any contingency upon which they might be determinable; in a most unequal manner it would take effect. If a person of the noble lord's profession near him (Lord Mulgrave) who exposed himself in the service of his country to the most noxious climate, and to the danger of his person in a variety of ways, had an annuity left him, it was of no value to him, compared with the same annuity in the hands of a man remaining at home at his ease; he could only sell it for four years purchase, whereas a person of a less dangerous profession could sell the same annuity for many more years purchase. This the table stating the value of the different annuities shewed, and yet the military man who could only sell for four years, was to pay as much tax for his annuity as the person who could sell for thirty-one years. Here therefore was a striking instance of the necessities of the state being made to bear with extreme severity upon a particular and a very deserving class of society; a class of men who were entitled to the peculiar care of the legislature on account of the risques they ran in the service of their country. He also put the case of the effect the Bill would have on a man, to whom the lease of an estate of which sixteen years only were to run was left, and a man who was to enjoy an estate for thirty-one years; each would have the same tax to pay. His lordship read one clause in the seventh page of the Bill,

Bill, which he said he had requested several lawyers to explain, but could procure no information; it was not surprising, then, that it should be perfectly unintelligible to him. Perhaps the noble lords, or other persons who were employed in drawing the Bill, might be able to give the House some satisfaction upon those points. The case of natural children appeared also to be attended with peculiar hardship; and in noticing this he could not help observing the unequal manner in which it would operate in England and Scotland, though, indeed, in favour of the latter. He belonged to Scotland, where if he had five or six, or any number of natural children, he might at any time legitimate them, by marrying the mother, and by the law of the country his property there would descend to them free from this tax; but if the case were to occur in this country, the natural born children, however deserving, could not receive any bequest he could make them without paying this enormous tax. Another grand objection to the principle of this Bill was, that it exposed all the property of the kingdom to the inspection of excise-men. Upon the death of any mercantile man, his successors, in fact, were obliged to take in the exciseman as a partner, and a most agreeable partner they would undoubtedly find him. Had this Bill passed some time ago, how would a certain noble Earl (Lord Westmoreland) have relished the idea of submitting to the necessity of taking in an exciseman as a partner in the arrangement of his lady's fortune. Yet such must have been the fact. All the Christmas balances, while a single farthing of her property remained in her father's house, must have been struck under the inspection of an exciseman, who, from that circumstance alone, might, without impropriety, have claimed a place in the firm. The iniquity of this Bill was flagrant in many instances, and it surely was a good argument against the principle of the Bill, if it could not be reduced to practice without injustice. There was one circumstance more he would advert to before he sat down, which he conceived, involved in it a considerable degree of injustice. There was a body of men not certainly engaged in commerce and manufactures, and consequently not liable, as such, to taxes, particularly affecting that description of men, but why should they upon every occasion, be exempted from giving their proportional support to the necessities of the state, as well as others not so favourably situated as themselves? If the whole collateral property of others were to be affected in that extraordinary manner, why for God's sake was the property of the church alone to escape untouched? Why should not the

church be called upon to administer to the wants of the state, and give of their good things to increase the revenues of the nation as well as other descriptions of men? In the Roman History, particular discouragement was recorded as having been given to a description of men, who solicited and cajoled, and flattered in order to obtain a legacy. He believed in the church there were such things as translations often anxiously pursued and importunately solicited. He saw no reason why every member of the church should not upon translation or presentation to a good living, be obliged to give up part of his annuity during the first four years of his incumbency, as well as the poor man who unfortunately steps into possession of his annuity in a different manner, by taking it in the way of a legacy? He had often heard of the alliance between church and state; they perhaps, indeed, conceived themselves so intimately connected and interwoven with one another, that what was enjoyed by the one was for the benefit of the other; and that such a demand upon the church would only be receiving with one hand to pay with the other.

Exclusive of these objections, the principle of the Bill was repugnant to every doctrine that had been advanced on the subject of taxation by the best and most approved writers. It was a well known principle that it was least injurious to the community to tax that part of property which was least capable of reproduction. It was upon consumption, not upon capital, that taxes could be levied with the least mischief. Taxes upon productive capital tended to withdraw the capital from the support of industry, and diminished that portion of wealth upon which circulation depended, and from which prosperity was derived; but our minister so celebrated at home and abroad for his wonderful talents in finance, was not to be circumscribed within the narrow bounds of established precedent and approved experience. He could not help thinking, however, that notwithstanding the admiration of the minister's friends in this country, it would give a most unfavourable idea of our situation and resources to the enemy, when they found that we were compelled to adopt such unheard of and untried measures, for the purpose of relieving the necessities of the state. It was a system in its operation fatal to the constitution, and destructive of that commercial security upon which the prosperity of trade, and the flourishing state of our finances depended. He must again repeat, that the conduct of the noble Secretary, in preserving silence, when he brought a measure of this important nature to that stage where the principle ought to be explained and discussed, was such as

loudly

loudly to call for the warm language, and open animadversion, which he had found himself compelled to use on the present occasion.

Lord Grenville said, from what he had heard he saw no reason to depart out of the usual course. The noble Earl had himself said, the principle of the Bill was recognized already, and the present, it must be admitted was nothing more than an extension of that principle. The noble Earl had assumed a right of calling upon ministers to speak, and of holding out to them the line of conduct, which he considered as fit for them to pursue. After the long experience he had of the noble Earl's political conduct in the House and elsewhere, highly as the noble earl might think of himself, he assured him, that he would act agreeably to his own sense, and his own judgment, and not be governed by any advice suggested by the noble Earl, whose political opinions had uniformly tended to introduce innovation, and to destroy rather than to support the constitution of the country. Every system of finance had been opposed by the noble Earl upon principles that led him to argue that every system was wrong which tended to promote the honour and prosperity of the country. He did not feel disposed, he observed, to offer any apology to their lordships for speaking, or preserving silence, as he should ever exercise his judgment, in this particular, as he thought fit. So far he did not conceive himself liable to be called upon by the noble Earl, and consequently did not consider it necessary to apologize for not deviating from what was the uniform and established practice of parliament. Much that the noble Earl had said about the Bill referred, rather to the consideration of the committee than to the second reading, when the principle of the Bill alone should be discussed. Nothing had been urged by the noble lord to induce him to go at length into the clauses of the bill; he could not, however, avoid noticing the unqualified and broad assertion made by the noble Earl, that this Bill, in its effects, would seize on the whole capital of the country. These were certainly large words, which were not borne out by the subsequent part of the noble Earl's speech. The Bill before their lordships was for the purpose, not of seizing on the whole capital of the kingdom, but a Bill to impose a tax on collateral successions, a principle neither new to the constitution, nor novel in its principle. He did not think their lordships would conceive him bound to give any answer to what the noble lord had stated, with respect to a tax on landed property, a subject not then before the House, nor at all connected with it; if such should be deemed necessary

fary to provide for the burdens of the state, he had no doubt but such a tax would be adopted. The present Bill, in defiance of the large words used by the noble Earl, was nothing more than a Bill on collateral successions, and did not in the least affect lineal descent. He would not follow his lordship by going at large into the abstract principle of taxation; if indeed it had been necessary to proceed to the inquiry, he could have easily proved that all succession was a creature of government. This arose from the practice of the law; and, therefore, no means could be devised more reasonable than that of taxing collateral successions, which were secured by the laws of the country. If this principle was recognized and adopted by the existing law, and was consonant to all theory and practice, and if it was found that the present law was partial in some cases, ought it not to be remedied? The House was not called upon to pass a new law, but to extend the provisions of one already in force; and if that extension was deemed actually necessary for the benefit of the state, their lordships must look as it manfully, and the necessity of the state being admitted, while it did exist they must sacrifice even the interests of individuals to the general welfare, particularly, when considering the Bill under all circumstances, it would be found to be as fair and proper, and as impartial as any that could be devised. So much of the noble lord's speech demanded that short answer, which he trust he had given to the satisfaction of the House. With respect to what had been observed as to the mode of drawing up the Bill, he could not claim any merit in this particular—but thus much he must say, that he never read a Bill, the object of which was more accurately or more perspicuously defined. With regard to the objections made to different clauses by the noble Earl, that was not the stage to debate them, but as to the particular clause, page 7, which the noble earl had described as perfectly unintelligible, and which he said, he had consulted lawyers about who could not understand it, he must say he was no lawyer, as the little attention he had been able to pay to the proper studies of that profession, the short time he belonged to it, gave him no right to call himself one, he could only speak therefore as a man who pretended to nothing more, than a share of plain common sense, and as such he declared the bill appeared to him throughout, perfectly clear and intelligible. He thought those who drew it, for certainly he had no hand in drawing it, entitled to great praise, for having put a large, comprehensive, and complex Bill into a form of words as clear, as correct, and as obvious in their meaning as the English language would admit. That being
his

his opinion decidedly, he would not trespass longer on the time of the House.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* said, the noble lord misunderstood him if he supposed he meant to assume the power of dictating to his lordship that line of conduct which he should preserve. He only spoke as to the line of conduct which he conceived the noble lord *ought* to adopt. It was not arrogating to himself too much a right of judging what was due to the House from a peer of parliament in the situation in which the noble Secretary stood, whom it most undoubtedly became to give that explanation to which he had adverted. The noble Secretary had abstained from going into the subject at large, as he did not wish to excite a reply. He had, however, asserted, that he never saw a Bill more conspicuously worded, or more accurately drawn up than the present; he nevertheless declined entering into an analysis of a single clause, or said one word in explanation of the parts objected to, though he pronounced the whole so clear, that it could not be misunderstood by a man of the plainest sense and most moderate capacity. He had no objection to the noble Secretary conducting himself as he thought proper, or being as conceited as he pleased with respect to the judgment, the talents and abilities of himself and his associates; he must however lament that the effects of these were, that the country would be placed in a state of unparalleled embarrassment and distress, and the people would feel the load of taxes imposed on them by the present ministers, to be of infinitely greater weight than any it ever sustained by the misconduct of any of their predecessors. The noble Secretary had asserted, that he (*Lord Lauderdale*) ever acted contrary to the interest of his country, and repugnant to the constitution, and this sentiment seemed to be applauded by a noble lord in his eye (*Lord Sydney*). How then did the question stand if that were the case? Certainly thus, that the noble secretary and his associates must act precisely in the same manner, as he had on many occasions, at a distant period, acted in conjunction with the noble secretary and his friends. If the noble lord meant to convey the idea, that he had, through any improper motive, demeaned himself inconsistently with the interests of his country, then he must tell the noble secretary, that such insinuation could excite in him nothing but contempt; and whatever he and his colleagues might assert, he believed that without doors his conduct made a quite contrary impression.

Lord Douglas (*Earl of Moreton*) desired to know what reference any part of the noble earl's last speech had to the bill

56
bill under consideration? He said he thought the noble Earl was disorderly from the beginning, and had no right to reply or to introduce matter that was not connected with the question.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, he believed nobody had ever been called to order in so disorderly a way, nor did he ever hear a more trifling and insignificant observation. If the noble lord had thought him disorderly in any thing he had said, why did he not mention it at the time, and with regard to his having spoken several times, it had been the usage of the House upon all occasions, that the person who brought forward any question, had a sort of privilege of replying, or even being the last speaker. His speech had been in reply to the noble secretary of state.

Lord Douglas said, the peers were summoned on the second reading of the legacy tax Bill, and not to hear debates and replies on other subjects. Indeed he knew of no right any noble lord had to reply, he had heard that a noble lord who found himself misunderstood had a right to explain.

The Bishop of Rochester said, he was not surprised that the noble earl should make an attack upon the church; it was consistent with his principles and practice of debate; all schemes of innovation began with the destruction of religious establishments, it was always the first step with the advocates for equalization, and therefore it suited the noble earl's mode of argument; no wonder then that he blamed ministers for not beginning with the church. He would never sit silent and hear it said that the property of the church ought to be first seized on, or let it go forth that the term of alliance between church and state was grounded on immunities of the former from taxes. Formerly the clergy taxed themselves, and at that time they gave as much to the state as the laity; now they were taxed in common with other descriptions of men, Churchmen being included in all Bills of taxation in the same manner as laymen. The property of the church was not personal property; but churchmen paid as others did for their individual property. When a churchman bequeathed personal property, in what case he would ask was it exempted from taxation by the Bill on their lordships table? His Lordship added, that if the advocates for innovation wished to begin their reform by burying religious establishments in ruins, let them look to the example of France to judge of what would follow.

The Earl of Lauderdale assured the right rev. prelate that no assumed importance of tone with which the noble prelate chose to

live

liver his speeches in that House, should at all affect him; he would tell the noble prelate that it would much better become him and his situation, when he meant to reply, or to state what was said by other lords, to attend to facts, as they really were, rather than to what he fancied to be best for his own argument; rather to trust to his memory than have recourse to his invention and ingenuity. He never had said that the church property should be first seized on, but had argued and would still contend that churchmen should be taxed as well as laymen, when a tax on the capital of the kingdom was enacted in a Bill about to pass into a law, beginning with taxing the church; the assertion was wholly unfounded; when the necessities of the state were such as to require so new and extraordinary a mode of taxation, he could see no good reason why the church was to be entirely exempted; and the learned prelate ought to recollect that when he stated this in his first speech, he mentioned translations, presentations, preferments, and other clerical changes, equally sudden and unexpected that would well bear a tax of that nature. As to the disposition for equalizing or levelling that he was accused of, he despised the insinuation, come from what quarter it might, no man was less inclined to be a leveller, or to break down distinctions than he was, though he should be happy if by any exertions of his he could serve his country, and avert the mischiefs ministers were drawing on. If ministers and their adherents pursued the system they had been acting upon, he could not see the possibility of sustaining the constitution of the country, to which he was as firmly attached as any man in or out of that House could be. However lofty in his tones, harsh in his expressions, or presumptuous in his manner, the noble prelate might be, he was perfectly conscious that what he said in that way, would go but for very little with the public at large.

The *Bishop of Rochester* said, the point had escaped him which the noble earl had noticed, but he meant to have spoken to it. The noble earl, he conceived, must have been aware that the translations, and all the other changes in church preferment to which he had alluded, were already taxed, and that churchmen in common with every other description of men, bore their equal share in all taxes whatsoever, one single instance only excepted, *viz*: where the rectory or vicarage house was extra parochial, and therefore did not pay parochial taxes. He added that he was astonished that the noble earl of all men should have passed such a criticism on him, and complained of his loud tone of voice, his assumed importance and his presumptuous manner.

Lord Grenville said, the noble earl might think him as conceited as he pleased, but he should still persist in acting upon his own judgment. He declared, he rose to confirm and support the Bishop of Rochester's assertion that there was no personal property in the church, but when churchmen become possessed of personal property by collateral succession, they were equally liable with others to the provisions of this Bill. On the point of order that had been stated, he wished to decline making a reply, he thought it necessary, however, to state that the church establishment was not nobly provided for to enable individual churchmen to wallow in wealth, but for far better purposes,—as the means of maintaining the constitution by the preservation of religion and morality which formed the basis of all order, all happiness, and all good government.

The Earl of Lauderdale in reply said, while noble lords were so punctilious about points of order, they placed him in a very strange situation, all their animadversions were levelled at him, and every instant he was put upon his defence. He had to defend himself against a bishop for a supposed attack upon property, and against a lay peer for a pretended attack upon religion. He disclaimed every idea of wishing to overturn church establishments, though he could not but remark that the noble lord had done no great credit to the church, by stating it to be the mere creature of government. He said, he perfectly well knew to what the learned prelate had alluded, but he belonged to a country where there was an established church of a different sort from that in this country, a church which he had as good a right to think as well adapted to the promotion of religion and morality as the established church in England; and by the articles of union he had an equal right, as a Peer of parliament, to state that opinion in favour of the church in which he had been brought up. In Scotland every purpose of religion and morality was fully answered, and men of genius, and wisdom, as pure principles, and practice, and as exemplary in their conduct were to be found in the church establishment of that country as in the church establishment of this, although it was by no means equally expensive; there all belonging to the Kirk had a competent provision and were content; but none were so enormously high in preferment as here, neither were there any so inadequately provided for, as to disgrace the church of England establishment was the case with many of not the least worthy of its ministers. He concluded with declaring that he believed it would be just as well for England to be on the same footing in respect to her church establishment as Scotland.

The

The question was then put on the second reading of the Bill, and carried without a division.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, April 14.

The Newspaper Conveyance Bill passed through a Committee; the report was received and the Bill ordered to be printed.

HIGH PRICE OF GRAIN.

Mr. *Lechmere* said he had given notice of a motion which he intended to bring forward before a committee of the whole House that day, to prevent the withholding of corn from the market, and also to prevent the adulteration of flour. These were great grievances to the industrious labourers in this country, and ought to be attended to by the House. It gave him great pain, however, to reflect that when any business respecting a loan, a contract, or any thing of that kind was to be brought forward, the House was crowded from one end of it to the other. But when the cause of the industrious poor was to be agitated, the House was so thin, that there was scarcely a sufficient number of members present to make a House, and if a proposition was made and objected to by any person on the other side of the House, the members were counted, and there being often too few to form a House, the matter for the time fell to the ground in consequence of non-attendance. This, he was sorry to be obliged to say, was a great reflection on that honourable House, and a deep disgrace to it. By such conduct, public business was very improperly impeded. In consequence of the House being so thin he would not bring forward the business he gave notice of for that day. He would bring it forward on Tuesday next. He meant to refer the subject to the committee on the high price of corn, and move on Tuesday the 19th that the committee should then sit.

The order of the day being read, the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole House on the report of the select committee on the high price of corn.

Mr. *Charles Dundas* moved, that the Chairman of the committee be directed to bring in a Bill to authorize the selling of corn by weight, and to prevent the frauds and adulterations in the sale of corn.

The resolution of the select committee, for selling corn by weight, &c. being read, was agreed to; and a Bill was ordered to be brought in, in pursuance of that resolution.

MILLERS BILL.

On the report of this Bill, some new clauses and amendments were proposed and agreed to, among others, one, enacting that every miller who ground corn for hire, should affix in some conspicuous place, the price of grinding in money, or the amount in toll; and that every miller, who should neglect to affix such notice, should be liable to a penalty not exceeding 20s.

Mr. *Lechmere* wished to know, whether it contained any clause for inflicting penalties on millers adulterating by other mixtures corn which may be delivered to them in a pure state?

Sir *Francis Basset* explained, that penalties for such misconduct were imposed by another act of parliament.

The report was then received, and the Bill ordered to be engrossed, and read a third time on Tuesday next, if then engrossed.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, April 15.

Heard counsel on the scotch appeal.

Received several Bills from the Commons, which were read a first time.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

FRIDAY, April 15.

A message from the Lords informed the House, that their lordships had agreed to a canal Bill, and passed an act to enable Richard Moorson, Esq. to marry again.

DOG TAX.

The dog tax Bill was read a first time, and on the motion for the second reading,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to desire it might be understood that he should persist in claiming some of the money imposed by this Bill for the public benefit, and that he should also persist in drawing a distinction between persons liable to this tax. The plan which he should propose to the committee was that which he had before stated to the House of charging three shillings upon every owner of a dog who pays assessed taxes, two shillings of which he meant to claim for the public use, and to apply the other to parochial purposes, but from those persons who keep a dog and do not pay assessed taxes, he should demand only one shilling, which might be paid

paid as a parish rate. Another benefit might be derived from this tax by the state, viz. to subject those persons who keep more than one dog, and are able to afford it, to a heavier penalty. He should propose in the committee to carry it up to five shillings for every dog, four of which he should apply to the service of the state, and at this rate, though he did not carry his computation so high as the honourable gentleman (Mr. Dent,) he calculated the tax would be able to produce a revenue of 100,000*l. per annum.*

Mr. Dent said he was sorry to differ from his right honourable friend, but he conceived the only benefit to be derived ought to be in regard to the poor-rates, and if the money were applied to any other use, he thought the tax would be unproductive and unpopular.

Mr. Jolliffe had began to state some observations, when the Speaker reminded the House that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had only given notice of some propositions he meant to bring forward in the committee.

The Order of the Day was read for the second reading of the Westminster Police Bill, but upon the motion for the second reading,

General Smith wished it to be deferred till some gentlemen at present prevented from attending, who intended to debate the principle of it, should have an opportunity to do so.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated, that there would be alterations in the committee after which it would be reprinted, and even then there would remain two stages or more in which gentlemen would have an opportunity to discuss the general principle of the Bill.

Mr. Burton urged a similar argument.

General Smith assented.

The Bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed on Monday the 15th instant.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, April 18.

Received nine Bills from the Commons, some of which were read a first time.

SCOTCH APPEAL.

Part of the interlocutor in the cause of *Stein v. Stuart, &c.* was ordered to be reversed, that the evidence might be taken in the court of session; by which the cause is referred back.

Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

MONDAY, April 18.

DUTCH PROPERTY BILL.

The House resolved itself into a Committee upon this Bill, which it went through without amendments.

Lowden's naturalization, and Tilney Inclosure Bills, were read a third time and passed.

Mr. Rose moved for an account of the quantities of wine imported and exported in the last two years, and the quantities imported and exported for the last five years to be laid upon the table, which were afterwards brought in, and referred to the committee of ways and means.

Mr. Rose laid an account upon the table of the provisions from the civil list for the suffering clergy and laity of France, which was referred to the committee of Ways and Means.

The Dutch property Bill was committed, and the report ordered to be made to-morrow.

THE COUNT DE SOMBREUIL.

Mr. Sheridan rose he said, to move for the production of a paper which had before been moved for by an honourable friend of his (General Tarleton) and had been refused. After that refusal, the House might judge of his surprise and astonishment when he saw the letter of the Count Sombreuil published in a daily paper. He did not hesitate a moment to pronounce that publication authentic and genuine, being influenced, in his opinion, both by the complexion of the journal in which it was published, and the particular features of the letter itself. He spoke in the recollection of those who heard his honourable friend move for the production of that letter, and it could not have escaped their remembrance that his honourable friend assigned as his reason for doing so, that it might be possible the letter contained not only an exculpation of the Count Sombrieul himself, but a crimination of those who advised and conducted the unfortunate expedition in which he suffered. He appealed to the recollection also of the House, as well as to the right honourable gentleman who refused the motion, (Mr. Windham) whether the production of the paper had not been refused because it related solely to a business of a delicate and private nature. Let gentlemen imagine then how much he was disappointed and astonished on perusing the copy published in a morning paper, which he had every reason to believe authentic, to find that so far from relating exclusively to any business of a private nature, it related principally

cipally to matters of public moment; the only excuse he could alledge for the right honourable gentleman's having made such a declaration was, that he had either read the letter slightly and cursorily, or from the distance of time in which it was discussed, and the multiplicity of business that had in the interim occupied his attention, he had wholly forgotten its contents; had that not been the case, he could scarcely have conceived it possible that the right honourable gentlemen would have given it such a colour. It did not appear from this letter that there was any paltry recrimination upon the persons who advised and conducted that unfortunate expedition, but the letter contained a foundation for a charge of the most marked criminality. It might be true that the right honourable gentleman did not stand singly responsible for that expedition, or that he had no further share in advising it than the rest of his colleagues, but whoever were the authors and abettors of it, there was not one word about any business of a private nature in it, while it afforded the strongest grounds of condemnation of ministers for sending the expedition out under circumstances the most gross, inhuman, and treacherous. He would, however, read the letter to the House.

FIRST LETTER.

"On board the John, Portsmouth Road,
July 8, 1795.

"SIR,

"The short stay which I made at London not having permitted me the honour of seeing you more than once, and my sudden departure having prevented me from conversing with you on several points of importance to me, in my present situation, I have sufficient confidence in your sagacity to be convinced, that I shall find such instructions as will serve me for a guide, and enable me to support the responsibility attached to my conduct, as well towards you as towards the troops under my command.

"A full conviction of the necessity of subordination, joined to a zealous devotion to the cause in which I have embarked, induce me to fly with precipitation at the first signal I receive, and never allow me to urge the smallest objection. I say nothing of the discretion which a government has a right to expect from those it employs; I have long since given sufficient proof of mine; and I have reason to believe, that they are such as will enable me to obtain, at least, those marks of confidence which are due to my situation.

"I have the honour to observe to you, Sir, that I am going with troops, of whose destination I know nothing but by public report, neither am I acquainted with their means of subsistence, nor, in the smallest degree, with the rules by which I am to regulate my conduct. What will be necessary, with regard to ammunition, with which I am not, to my knowledge, provided, and with regard to the support of those with whom I am to act; the means by which I am to carry on my correspondence with you, in a distant situation; and from whom I am, in all cases, to receive orders. These are points on which I request you to give me such instructions, as will serve as a basis for my conduct.

"I had the honour also to request that you would let me have an officer from the department of inspection. If you send me such a person, pray chuse a man who speaks both languages, that he may, on occasion, assist me in the translation of your letters; and that your orders may only be known to an officer chosen by government. I have the honour to be, with respect,

"Your very humble servant,

"COUNT DE CHARLES SOMBREUIL."

This

This was the *private* letter, he observed, which the hon. gentleman had stated to be interesting to the writer's feelings only, and not at all so to the public. He would next read, the other, addressed to the right honourable gentleman, which accompanied that to Sir John Borlase Warren, and which was represented to be sent to him as an object of particular respect and gratitude:—

SECOND LETTER.

From the COUNT DE SOMBREUIL to the Right Honourable WILLIAM WINDHAM dated Aurai, July the 22d, 1795, received by the hands of his servant, who remained with him till the hour of his death.

"SIR,

"The letter which I have written to Sir John Warren, will give you every information in my power to afford, as well on my present situation, as on past events; I will not remind you of the letter which I wrote to you from Portsmouth, as you doubtless feel the force of the remarks which I there made: you must be sensible how much my heart has to suffer in these last moments; independently of the regret which I experience for the fate of my companions, you know what sacrifices an order so prompt obliged me to make.

"I request you, Sir, to be so kind as to give to the bearer, a faithful man, and who has never abandoned me (and whom the losses I have sustained incapacitate me from rewarding) the sum of five hundred Louis, to be shared with my other servant. This request will not appear indiscreet, as I have lost several government securities to a greater amount.

I also recommend to you, Sir, the two persons about whom I spoke to you, before I left London.

"To Mr. WINDHAM,
Secretary at War.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,
"Your very humble Servant,
"COUNT CHARLES DE SOMBREUIL."

Mr. Sheridan begged the House to connect the remarks stated in this second letter with those made in the preceding one, by which means they would perceive what general affinity there was to business of a private nature. This letter displayed all the characteristics of a brave mind. It did not reproach the right honourable gentleman for his conduct, it only reminded him of the remarks in the former letter—That he was dispatched with troops upon an expedition of whose destination he was ignorant; that he was ignorant also of their command, their subsistence, and their ammunition. Here was none of that trifling verbiage which the right honourable gentleman had pretended, in fact it contained only a couple of lines which could be construed to relate to that beautiful and accomplished woman to whom his affections had been pledged, and who had since been reported to be disordered in her mind. The obvious conclusion was, that, when a man of such worth, valour, and honour was willing to perish in what he conceived to be a just cause, it was a shame and a reproach to his Majesty's ministers to abandon him, as they had done,

to

to his fate; conceiving therefore that these letters contained the strongest proofs of the gross and scandalous manner in which the expedition to the coast of France had been conducted, he moved—

“ That copies of the letters written by Count Charles de Sombreuil to the Secretary at War be laid upon the table.”

General Smith seconded the motion.

The *Secretary at War* said, that he had never heard observations made, which he less understood, or was less prepared to answer, though he did not imagine it very difficult to answer them in such a way as would be satisfactory to the House and justify his conduct. He would first recal the terms of the letter to the recollection of the House, and then give his reasons for persisting in his determination to oppose the motion, not because he was unwilling to discuss the question, but because the public were already in possession of the letter. Previous, however, to any further comment, he could not help remarking, that this question was brought forward at a moment when the House was waiting with anxious expectation for business of more immediate importance, upon which account he would not detain them by entering into much detail at that time.

Some misrepresentations had been made, which he wished to set right. When this subject was last under the consideration of the House, he had stated that the Count de Sombreuil's letter contained no reflections upon the expedition in which he was engaged; no reflections upon the person who was at the head of it; no reflections upon the conduct of his Majesty's ministers. The only motive he could conceive the Count de Sombreuil could have in his last letter for referring him to the expressions in the former were, that harrassed and confounded as he was, in his last fatal moments, he referred him rather to what was passing in his mind, than what he had actually committed to paper. That was his impression when he gave a description of those letters to the House, and that was his impression now. The reference, however, was so, obscure and vague, that there was no knowing what he meant, nor did he perhaps know exactly what he meant himself. The subsidiary letter certainly had a meaning in reference to some painful circumstances interesting to his private feelings which did refer to the uncertain situation in which he was going. The Count was desirous that the nature and extent of his command should be ascertained, and that was the object for which it was written; in a public point of view however, the letter was of no importance whatever.

Upon one or two observations of the honourable gentleman,

tleman, although hurried by the impatience of the House he begged leave to say a few words. He was charged with cruelty in sending this gallant officer away upon short notice. How did that *prima facie* apply? There surely could not be much complaint upon his being sent away on a specific appointment. He came from Yarmouth to London, when the troops under his command were ready to sail, and he might say, that even then, Count de Sombreuil was not sent out, for he had pressed him to defer his departure. There was scarcely any thing worth answering; he would notwithstanding inform the House that Count de Sombreuil immediately after his arrival in London, waited upon him with inquiries about his troops, when he was told they were under orders to sail. He then, for the first time, opened to him his intentions of marriage, when he advised him, not as a public man, but one who participated in his feelings, to defer his departure, partly hoping that the expedition, as is frequently the case, in such adventures, might be delayed, partly from his sense of the character of Count de Sombreuil, which he knew was too high to suffer imputation, and partly from a conviction, that if he should be too late for that expedition, he would not be absent from any other for which he might be wanted. However on being pressed for the distinct truth, he was obliged to confess that the troops were really under sailing orders, though he promised to make further inquiry; and he believed he afterwards wrote a note repeating the arguments he had before used. He hoped no man would impute dissingenuousness, and want of candour to him, though he was apprehensive from the behaviour of gentlemen on the other side, that they were inclined to do so. He was proceeding in a strain of asperity, when

The *Speaker* called him to order.

The *Secretary at War* continued. Anger had its privilege, he said, and he hoped he should be allowed it, as he had some cause for that sensation. He told the Count, in his note, that as he was known to be ever ready for service, an action, more or less, could make no difference, when the Count used a particular expression, which he had repeated in his letter from Portsmouth, "I am determined to embark in the expedition, I have seen much service, and am ready to obey the first signal:" and he accordingly set off that night. It appeared that he had not the means of making out the purpose he was going for without a distinct explanation; as he was however going to do nothing but carry out a body of troops from the Elbe, he would know when he arrived at the place of destination

destination what he was to do, as all subordinate officers do, and that would be sufficient.

In respect to producing the letter in any other form than that in which it had appeared, he was determined to resist it, although he was aware that an injurious insinuation would in consequence lay against him. Still, however, he disregarded every personal consideration, and even if he could get no other person to join him, he would singly oppose the motion as repugnant to the interests of the public service. If the letter must be produced before the public, there it was; and he desired the public to look at it, and examine it, and then determine whether it justified the accusation brought against him. Of this at least he was assured, that the gentlemen on the other side either knew or supposed that he had lost the letter, when they originally moved for its production, or they would not have called for it.

General Smith said, if the House or nation wanted any further testimony of the gallant conduct of the Count de Sombreuil, they had only to remember what the right honourable gentleman had just said of him; that, instantly after he had landed in this country, he renounced his dearest attractions to shew his activity in what he deemed essential to his honour. He needed not to repeat all that the right honourable gentlemen had said, for every man must see that his arguments did not correspond. He thought so, at least, and he would undertake to prove it. The letter, in his opinion, concerned the public service, and nothing but the public service, except the character of Sombreuil. The General said, he kept in mind the letter to Sir John Borlase Warren, together with the various disasters in the expedition, and he conceived that the Count de Sombreuil, being anxious for his character, hoped the honourable gentleman would publish what in his opinion contained all that could justify his conduct. This was the last solemn request of a dying man who had never forgotten his duty, and was likely to review his unfortunate situation with a circumspect and scrutinizing eye. It was to be remembered that he had embarked without any information on the subject of the expedition; that he was neither furnished with orders nor instructions; that he was considered as a junior officer, and was ignorant of the command. When he recollected that that command was given to Puilaye, a man whom many officers thought it a disgrace to serve under, a man who was generally considered unworthy of the charge entrusted to his care, and who had never attained a higher rank than that of Major,

he had pretty strong reasons to believe that if the Count de Sombreuil had known the command was to be given to such a man, he would never have gone upon the expedition. It was obvious that Puitsaye knew nothing of his profession, and therefore it was natural that the last wish of a dying gallant soldier like Sombreuil, who had gloriously run his course and career of life, should be to exculpate himself from having any ruling power in such a shameful expedition. Upon this ground he thought the letter was a public account, and nothing but a public account, and therefore he stood up to support the motion.

Mr. Fox said, that of all the instances he had ever experienced, and he had experienced a great many in common with other gentlemen in that House, where men have changed their political principles, and have forgotten all their former declarations, he must confess he was never more surprised than he had been at the language of the right honourable gentleman that night and the language he used upon a former day. That he should have received such a letter, and not have produced it when called upon, or even without being called upon to do so, was as extraordinary, and as exceptionable an incident as he had ever met with. His objection, however, was, that he acted under a supposition that the letter was lost. If the honourable gentleman, did act under that supposition, it was wholly unknown to him, for till a few weeks since, he had never heard the report. Grant however that he had, was it right for him consistently with his parliamentary duty to listen to every report he heard, and act upon each specifically? If that were the case, there would be no need of justification, since whenever ministers were called upon to produce any paper to which they might object, they would only have to state, that such an unfortunate circumstance as this had happened, and all would be as they could wish. Happily however the letter had been found, happily so at least in regard to the memory of Sombreuil; if it had not, the House and the public would have known nothing of it, but from description, and how could they have judged from the description given them, whether a heavy accusation did not lie against the gallant officer, who had been so desirous to exculpate himself of having a part in the scandalous conduct of the Quiberon expedition. If there was any one thing which that unfortunate gentleman seemed most to deprecate, it was the consciousness of having any share in that transaction. It was true indeed that no formal accusation lay against him; for his own part, he had always supposed that the emigrants were the chief

chief advisers of that unfortunate expedition; but when he considered their situation, he did not blame them: on the contrary he felt for them, since they only added to the responsibility of ministers, inasmuch as the rashness and folly would have been excusable in them, which was degrading to the character and understandings of British ministers, and he believed every man would be of that opinion. Sombreuil in the meantime, till that appeal was made, was not excupated; when he found all gone, and that he had no further hopes of life, he still was anxious that his reputation should survive him, and accordingly appealed to that letter as a public document, which the honourable gentleman was bound to publish, if he entertained no personal regard, upon the principle of the Roman word *necessitudo*. He at least ought to have done him the justice to declare, that so far from having any concern in that calamitous expedition, he did not know who had the command, the amount of his force, nor where the place of destination was appointed to be. There did appear something in all this that required to be explained, something that called for publication. If that were the case, what justification was there for having mislaid a letter of so much importance? He had never heard at what period that letter was recovered; but the moment it was missing, so much was due to the memory and dying prayer of Sombreuil, that some account of it, and some excuse for its being mislaid, should have been submitted to the House, accompanied with a recapitulation of its contents, as accurately as could be collected. Whether the multiplicity of business had erased the remembrance of it, he could not say, though he believed something like that excuse was urged upon a former day. Nevertheless it appeared to him somewhat singular that points so remarkable, should totally escape such a retentive memory as the honourable gentleman had been known to possess, and he could attribute this amazing and sudden defect to nothing but the honourable gentleman's present unhappy connections, whose weakness that way was proverbial. He ought not however to have lost a day in announcing the recovery of these important papers to the House.

There was a peculiar singularity in the conduct of the right honourable secretary upon this occasion. He had stated, that he waited in daily expectation that gentlemen in opposition would call for this letter, to give him an opportunity of entering into an explanation concerning it; he had also stated, that he conceived that it was highly improper for them to ask for it; so that it appeared that he waited for the gentlemen in
opposition

opposition to do something evidently wrong, before he would do any thing indisputably right; and so strong was his desire to censure them, that he delayed performing a duty imposed upon him by the most solemn of all injunctions, in order that he might have an opportunity, by their making an improper request, of finding fault with their conduct. The right honourable gentleman was so anxious to criminate his old friends, that, in order to obtain an opportunity of doing it, he delayed performing the dying request of a new one. What system of honour or principle could justify this mode of proceeding he did not know; it required a most extraordinary mind like that of the right honourable gentleman's own to determine. Whether his honourable friend (General Tarleton) had heard of these letters being lost when he first mentioned them, he did not know, but he believed he had not. Admitting, however, that he had, what was to be his conduct? Was he, because he had heard it vaguely reported that these or any other papers were mislaid, not to make the public business in which they were involved an object of inquiry? Was there any intercourse between them and the honourable gentleman on the other side, or any sort of encouragement from those gentlemen to incline them to such a proceeding? For his own part, as he had before declared, he had heard it loosely stated that these letters were lost, but he heard not that report till the period subsequent to their being found. The letter ought not to have been mislaid, as it was a letter of most serious charge, implicating the honour of Sombreuil, and the publication of it depended not upon what they considered its importance to be, but upon the wish and request of Sombreuil. His wish ought to have been the wish of Administration, and their promptitude in acceding to the request of a man under such circumstances, ought to have superseded all considerations of a personal nature. He concluded, by declaring, that he should give his vote with the greatest satisfaction, and if a general discussion should take place on the Quiberon expedition, the paper moved for, he was persuaded would throw considerable light upon it, and upon that ground he gave his vote for the motion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, when he considered the important business before the House, he certainly would not contribute to the prolongation of the debate; he should, therefore, not enter into the merits of the Quiberon expedition. Gentlemen had been in the habit of using strong expressions upon that subject; he expressed his readiness to participate in the obloquy, if any attached on the conduct of administration,

ministration, as he certainly did in the responsibility of the expedition to the coast of France, and when that subject came under discussion on *prima facie* grounds of misconduct, he pledged himself to convince the House, that there was no ground of censure, no violation of their duty, in the confidential servants of the crown, though the gentlemen on the other side had been as profuse of epithets as they were deficient in argument. At present the question he conceived involved the consideration, whether there existed any public or parliamentary grounds for the production of this letter. The right honourable gentleman assumed, that the Count de Sombreuil laboured under the imputation of having advised this expedition? no such imputation had, however, been thrown upon him, and it was impossible that it should. It did not appear upon the face of the transaction, that he had any share in it, and, in fact, the expedition was planned, and had actually commenced, before the Count came from the Continent with his regiment. He served whatever might have been his talents, in a subordinate capacity and possessed no power of remonstrance as a commandant. Even if there had been any imputation resting upon him, was it not fully done away by the publication of this letter? It appeared, therefore, that the gentlemen on the other side called for the production of a letter, to rescue the character of this gentleman from an imputation that could never have attached upon it, and which, if it had attached, must have been wiped away by the publication of the letter. The right honourable gentleman had misrepresented his right honourable friend (Mr. Windham.) He did not say that he waited for a motion for the production of this letter to give an explanation, but he said, he waited until the subject of the expedition itself should be brought forward, that he might, with propriety, perform the request of a gallant and heroic officer. If the gentlemen were so deeply impressed with the necessity of producing this letter, how happened it, that with this strong impression upon their minds, they had waited so long without calling for it?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded with declaring that no parliamentary ground whatever had been laid before the House to justify its production; and every end that the Count could have had in view, had been answered by its publication; he should therefore move the order of the day.

Mr. Fox explained. He said the production of the letter was not more necessary in the House to exculpate Sombreuil, than to criminate the persons who advised and conducted the calamitous expedition in which he lost his life.

Mr.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, the Secretary at War, in claiming the privilege of an *angry man*, had substituted words and passion for proof and argument. Whether he had said any thing to provoke irritation he knew not, he should, however, even at the hazard of incurring the right honourable gentleman's resentment, assert, that he was authorized by the letter to contend that Sombreuil left London under an impression that he was to have the supreme command, and that he would have declined the service altogether, had he known that De-Puisaye was to have had that distinguished rank. The calamity that attended that expedition he attributed solely to the division of council, for the coward Puisaye secured his retreat, while the other brave companions of his voyage were left a prey to his treachery, and that calamity he charged as a crime against his Majesty's ministers.

The motion for the order of the day was put and carried without a division.

THE BUDGET.

The House then resolved itself into a committee of Ways and Means.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose, and said, that the subject which he had to lay before the committee that night was particularly deserving of their attention, considering the extent of the public burdens in the course of the war, and the aggravation which during a part of that period, had arisen from collateral circumstances. Under the very arduous nature of the contest in which we were engaged, and of the peculiar situation of this country, in consequence of our having recently received a public avowal of the present sense and dispositions of those who govern the councils, and direct the government of our enemies, it became peculiarly proper and requisite to enter into an examination of the further exertions which might be necessary on our part to continue the contest, by an examination of our resources, depreciated as they had been by the enemy abroad and attacked at home by the strongest exertions and talents of some honourable gentlemen, he feared but too successfully, it became a subject of the greatest magnitude and importance which could claim the attention of the House, to shew by the fair result of a distinct examination of the true situation of this country, what were its resources; on which, in a great measure, might depend the ultimate issue of the contest, and the fate of this country, and of all Europe. Such was the subject of that night; he approached it, and indeed it was impossible not so to approach it, with a considerable portion of anxiety and solicitation, and yet

yet he would sincerely say, that after revolving it in his mind as carefully and deliberately as it was possible for him to do; and after endeavouring to examine it most minutely in all its parts, he approached it with a sincere and rooted confidence, and if he should be able to do justice to the truth of the facts which he should have to state, and by which the judgment of the House ought alone to be guided, he then should be able to give the surest grounds of hope, and of just confidence in the resources of the country, and disappoint the proud and presumptuous expectations which an enemy had founded upon a contrary supposition. Before he entered into any detail, he was anxious to convince the House of the importance of the subject, and to impress it on their minds to its fullest extent. The general discussion, which he had to submit to their consideration, and which he should endeavour to compress within as narrow limits as possible, would comprehend three distinct heads.

1st, The substitution of such new ways and means as might be thought advisable by the committee, and as he should suggest in lieu of those proposed before Christmas, but which, upon representations that had been made and after due enquiry, he had thought it policy to relinquish.

2d, The statement of such services as had not been foreseen, in providing for the services of the year, and in proposing to the committee the means of meeting those services.

3d, The measure that he thought it would be advisable for the committee to adopt, in order to remove the distress occasioned by the temporary demand for money, and in order to give facility to commercial credit.

These were the three principal points upon which he had that day to call the attention of gentlemen, and from the discussion of which he was assured that they would derive the full and perfect satisfaction, which he felt in his own bosom, not merely with regard to the general sufficiency of the country, but also with regard to its growing and unprecedented prosperity.

SUBSTITUTES FOR THE TAX ON PRINTED COTTONS.

In stating the ways and means in December, he had mentioned his intentions of providing taxes for a calculated yearly value of 1,120,000*l.* of which 135,000*l.* was to arise from a certain tax on printed cottons and calicoes: he meant, in the first instance, to provide substitutes for this tax, as it was thought advisable to withdraw it. The house would therefore see, that with regard to this part of the subject he did not

mean to lay fresh burdens on the people in point of amount, but to find a different mode of imposing them. A measure brought forward by an honourable gentleman (Mr. Dent) would afford him a substitute to the amount of the greatest part of the deficiency; he meant the tax on dogs. The house were of opinion with him, that if the owners of dogs were proper objects of taxation, a certain proportion of that tax ought to be applicable to the public service: this, according to the statement he had made on a former night, which would arise from the surplus of two shillings on dogs kept by persons paying the assessed taxes, and a greater increase on those who kept a plurality of dogs, would produce, according to his calculation, 100,000*l.* a year, and which he had reason to believe would be collected with great facility. This sum deducted from the amount of the deficiency, left 35,000*l.* for which he would provide after the following manner. It was generally allowed to be the least unexceptionable, and the most desirable tax, which might arise by such regulations as would prevent the evasion of any existing duty, and enforce its due collection:—

DUTY ON HATS.

The duty laid upon hats at present had been found to decline yearly in its produce since its first institution, and was reduced so low, as to be scarcely of any service to the public revenue; and at the same time that it afforded no advantage, it had this particular attendant quality, that it fell particularly heavy on the conscientious trader; any just and honest hatter, who paid the Tax, ran the risk of disobliging his customers; whilst, on the other hand, the fraudulent trader had every encouragement and advantage. A mode of collecting it, he said, had been communicated to him which must enforce the duty, and which was as simple as it was likely to be effectual. He meant, that, instead of being collected by a stamped paper, which was easily separated from the hat, it should be collected by a stamp upon the lining of the hat, in a way which would make it impossible for the wearer not to know whether he had or had not paid the duty. He would not then enter more particularly into the subject of that tax; perhaps it would be more convenient to the house to reserve any particular discussion of it, until a bill should be introduced in consequence of the resolution of the committee. It would be only necessary for him to state its probable amount, and this, he believed, gentlemen must be aware, was a tax of which it was difficult to enter into any calculation; he had heard, that when it was originally laid on, it was calculated to produce 100,000*l.* but he believed

believed that it had never actually produced more than 30,000*l.* which was the amount the first year after it was imposed; ever since which time it had been gradually diminishing, and in the last year it produced 6000*l.* only; he could not state what might be the addition by the present proposed mode of enforcing the duty, but he believed he might safely calculate at 40 or 50,000*l.* beyond what it at present produced. He would, however, only state it at 40,000*l.* per annum; which added to the 100,000*l.* a year arising from the surplus dog tax, would amount to 140,000*l.* This sum was more than sufficient to supply the deficiency by abandoning the tax on cottons; and the substitutes, he confessed, were the more advisable objects of taxation, and would press more lightly and more generally than the cotton tax, which he had stated in the former budget.

ARMY, ORDNANCE, AND NAVY.

The next point which he had to state for the consideration of the committee was of a much larger extent, and one to which it was necessary, more particularly to call their attention; he meant such increased charges as it might be necessary to provide for, and which had occurred since the statement of the budget at Christmas; as also for services which were not at that time foreseen, together with their amount, and the mode which he meant to propose for defraying them. That mode, he said, was connected with another object, viz: that of giving relief to the general state of credit in the country. He should, therefore, first state the amount of the services, and the mode of defraying them; which was also in some degree connected with the measure which he meant to propose in the exigency of the present enlarged demand of accommodation in the commercial world; the measure was, to take out of the market a great proportion of the paper constituting the unfunded debt, and by that means relieve the Bank from the advances which they had made, so as to enable them to allot a larger sum of money to commercial discounts; this operation would necessarily demand some increase of the public burdens, as they would have to provide for the difference between the small interest which this floating debt now bore, and the higher interest which it would bear on being funded, he would more particularly explain this in the proper place.

And, first of the services, there had been incurred since the 31st of

December last, and not provided for under the head of army ex-

traordinaries,

Of Ordnance,

The additional sum required for the creation of Barracks he esti-

mated at

535,000

200,000

267,000

The

The sum for secret service, above the sum included in the last estimate, and above the sum of 25,000*l.* allowed in time of peace, including likewise sums paid to the suffering Clergy of France, he took at 100,000

And the sum which in the last statement the ways and means were short of the supply, 177,000

These services made together, 1,279,000

To which he should add a sum which he felt would be necessary to make good the further army extraordinaries up to the end of the year 1796, 1,221,000

Making in all of new services above the statement opened in the month of December last for the services of the current year the sum of 2,500,000

The next point which he was led to consider was a charge, of which he would now only state the general result; he meant the provision which under all the circumstances existing at present it might be necessary to make for the funding such parts of the increase of the navy debt during the war, which had not been provided for in the course of the preceding years, and not to leave any which had not been already provided for of that debt incurred since the commencement of the war, or rather since the first of December 1791. The sum for which interest was found in the course of the year 1795, amounted to 3,594,000*l.* because it had been the custom always to make provision in the preceding year as far as may be calculated; to that must now be added 1,640,000*l.*

The next charge which he had to state was, what debt it might probably be found necessary to incur, supposing the war to continue to the 31st of December 1796; he had stated it before Christmas as likely to amount to 2,500,000*l.* which calculation he had made by conjecture, derived from a comparison of the then supposed navy debt incurred in 1795; but as that debt had stretched out by the operation of unforeseen causes to the amount of above 1,600,000*l.* more than was then expected; the same cause, he meant the adverse winds which obliged the large equipment destined for the West Indies, to put back, would also produce expences running into the service of the present year, such as the expences of repair, and also the detention and hire of transports; the additional expence, amounting, as he supposed it would, to about as much in 1796 as in 1795, he must agreeable to the rule and mode which he had laid down as his duty to follow, of keeping back no proportion whatsoever of the expences, bring

bring forward, and he would calculate it at 1,500,000*l.* which, in addition to the former computation of 2,500,000*l.* would produce a navy debt up to the 31st of December 1796, of 4,000,000*l.* and he must here remark, that although he had stated a farther increase of extraordinaries of the army, to the amount of 1,200,000*l.* yet, if under all the circumstances, a further increase of 800,000*l.* should be unexpectedly incurred, he begged to inform the committee that there were resources to provide for the full amount.

The next head of charge was one that did not arise from any new services to be provided for; but only because it became necessary, under the present circumstances, to diminish the unfunded debt, by taking 3,500,000*l.* in Exchequer Bills out of the market; to do which it became necessary to borrow that sum. The motive that led to this measure was, that, while all the unfunded debt remained in the market, it prevented the bank from the usual assistance for the relief of trade. Interest for this sum of 3,500,000*l.* to the amount of three and a half per cent. had been provided already; but in order to fund this debt, it was necessary to provide two and a half per cent. in addition to the three and a half already provided, viz. one and a half per cent. to make up the deficiency of the interest, and one per cent. for the sinking fund; this two and a half per cent. upon 3,500,000*l.* would amount to 87,500*l.*

The sums he had already stated, he would recapitulate, in order that the house might go along with him in the statement; 2,500,000*l.* Exchequer bills to be funded; 1,640,000*l.* of navy debt already incurred; the estimated navy debt for the year 1796, was 4,000,000*l.* The other exchequer bills, which were to be funded for the relief of the market, 3,500,000*l.* There was another sum of 1,000,000*l.* which was also to be funded, but was already provided for, both as to interest and the one per cent. for the sinking fund; for the house would recollect, that in providing for the expences of the year 1795, he provided for a loan of 19,000,000*l.* though he only took 18,000,000*l.* the other million had been issued in exchequer bills, and had been fully provided for, as he before stated.

In order to give the committee a perfect view of the present state of public finances, and of all the expences that he could foresee, he ought to mention that there was one more contingent service that might occur in the course of the present year, the probable allowance of 1,000,000*l.* for bounties on corn, to be imported according to the act had which passed at the beginning of the present session. At the time that this provision

vision was made, it was hoped that we should be able early to ascertain the amount of the sum to be required, fortunately we had been relieved from our apprehensions, sooner than was expected; and there was every reason to believe, that the sum to be paid had been greatly over-rated: it was not now he thought likely, that more than 300,000 quarters of wheat would be imported in the course of the present year, in consequence of the high bounty the nation was to give; and he had the pleasure to say, that the greatest part of this grain would come to us from the recently acquired possessions which our arms had gained; and which, if we should be so happy as permanently to retain, he would be bold to say, would create a new æra in the commercial establishments and prosperity of this country. Considering the very material change that had taken place in the aspect of our own corn market, and in the certainty of a supply to the amount, at least, of the quantity which he had stated, the minds of gentlemen would be relieved from all apprehensions of a scarcity; and he had further the cheering and comfortable information to give to the committee, that even for this probable bounty of 300,000l. on 300,000 quarters of wheat, he had a sure and ample resource without any further demand upon the country; he had the happiness to inform them that such was the prosperous state of the affairs of the East India company, that even in the very first year of their new acquisitions, the country would be enabled to participate to the amount at least of this sum to be required for bounties. He had no doubt but that we might now look annually to the East India company for the 500,000l. which had been set down as the estimated participation of the public in their profits. To what further amount the new acquisitions in the east that had been made, would carry those profits, it was hardly possible for the mind of man to conjecture. The public might with confidence look for very considerable aids from this source. These were all the heads of service which he had to submit to the committee, and which he could foresee for the additional supply of the year. From these several heads then the sum to be permanently charged upon the country was as follows:

The interest on the sum of 2,500,000l. of services added to those in his former statement, and including always the additional one per cent. towards the sinking fund, would be.	1,500,000
The difference of the interest on the navy debt unfunded would be	98,400
The interest on the 4,000,000 of navy debt	240,000
	The

The difference of the interest on the sum of 3,500,000*l.* of Exchequer bills above the rate of interest already provided for them 87,500

Making altogether the annual sum to be provided for by taxes of 575,900

And in order to make the operation immediate for the benefit of the commercial world, the amount of the money to be raised by loan, and to be appropriated in the manner which he had stated, was this :

The amount of the extraordinary services for the year 1796, was 2,500,000

The sum of Exchequer bills to be bought from the bank, or from the Market, was — — — — 3,500,000

The sum of navy bills to be bought from the bank was — 500,000

And the sum to be repaid the bank for the advances they had made in

Exchequer bills, on the security of the consolidated fund, was 1,000,000

Making together a sum to be borrowed by a new loan of 7,500,000

SCARCITY OF MONEY.

That there had existed an inconvenience from the increased demand, was true, and he did not hesitate to say, that it was not at all surprising. When he examined the causes which gentlemen on the other side of the house thought proper to impute to the scarcity of money which existed at present, he believed that they proceeded from causes of an opposite nature, and instead of being the result of poverty and decrease, they arose partly from the increased commerce of the country. He had no difficulty in allowing that they had proceeded partly from the great expences of the war in which we were engaged, and from the necessity of remitting large and unusual sums of money to the continent, and those sent for defraying the army extraordinaries in maintaining a continental army, and also by the operation of a loan to the emperor, which certainly drained a great portion of money; but which loan he was proud to state, had produced in a great measure those important and gallant victories of the Imperial armies over the French, which they had gained towards the conclusion of the last year.

When he considered the prosperity of this country, by which it had been enabled to support all its burdens—when he compared the state of the commerce of this country with its commerce in former years, it furnished a just and solid ground of satisfaction to him, and certainly to those in the country who were acquainted with the subjects of commerce and finance. He felt, indeed, great matter of consolation, when he considered various subjects relating to commerce; when he

he considered the general state of exchange at that time; when he compared the state of the commerce and balance of trade with our situation in former wars; when he considered that the state of exchange was nearly brought to a level, and was opening floodgates, through which the money expended was pouring back in torrents, to increase the prosperity of this country, and, by the silent and natural progress of commercial causes, furnished ground for reasonable hope that all that was sent abroad would return with the more extended influx of general wealth. One of the causes of the present temporary scarcity, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, evidently arose from the support of our foreign allies, and our army extraordinaries, there were other causes, which also in a great measure contributed to that effect; causes, he was happy to add, not connected with the difficulties of the country, but connected with its large growing resources and rich increasing prosperity. It was a fact known to deep and acute politicians, that the circulating medium of a country must bear a certain proportion to the extent of active capital, to the extent of commercial speculation. Allowing this to be just as a general proposition, it applied particularly in this country at present. The extent of our trade, evident and acknowledged, had increased a demand for money for the purposes of additional speculations, of that which was the source of wealth and national prosperity, and had called for a large quantity of medium. That increased demand being allowed as one cause of scarcity, and the scarcity being confessed and apparent, it remained to consider what were the proper methods of remedying such a difficulty. Every man acquainted with great mercantile subjects must know, that where scarcity of money existed, a large quantity of unfunded debt would increase that scarcity in a great degree, and that scarcity will tend to depreciate the unfunded debt; the consequence of which depreciation would be, that men possessed of cash would lay out the ready money on the discount of the unfunded debt, which would then be large, instead of applying it to mercantile purposes, or speculations in manufactures &c. which diversion of their capital must be injurious to the public. The funded debt of the country spread far and wide as a medium, in the most extended commerce, in foreign nations, and all through this kingdom; but the unfunded debt was confined to the capital, chained the current of its commerce, and swallowed up a great part of the medium. When a scarcity existed, there would naturally be a considerable demand for discount at the Bank, and the large unfunded debt would make

make it impossible in the Bank to supply the merchants so much in advance, as they might do if the debt were funded. It was therefore necessary at present to assist the Bank, by funding to the amount of the incurred and probable expences, by funding the unfunded debt of 3,500,000*l.* of Exchequer Bills for which an additional interest of two and a half *per cent.* would be to be provided, and also to find cash for the 500,000*l.* of the Navy Bills held by the Bank, and by increasing their cash, to afford them the means with prudence, of continuing the discount to the merchants for the benefit of trade. The seven millions and a half which he proposed to raise would be applicable to assist the Bank, whilst it provided for the different services incurring and incurred. Gentlemen conversant in subjects of this nature, would know that this plan was likely to have the effect of giving a speedy and effectual relief to the temporary scarcity of money.

He had already stated the three objects of what he would propose, he meant the amount of the expence of providing for the remaining services existing or foreseen, for giving that relief necessary from the general state of credit, and for providing a substitute for the cotton tax, which last he had already fully considered. The other two objects would produce an increase of interest, of the annual sum of 575,000*l.* a year. It was therefore important, for the purpose of raising the just hopes of this country, and of diminishing the hopes of our enemies, that we should shew that our resources were equal, without the possibility of cavil, to meet the service and all the exigencies of the present year. He should not take into the account, the resource of the lottery, though he was of opinion, that the lottery was a resource that might very well be taken into the account, if he saw fit, from year to year, to do it. He would, however, reserve it as a fund with other funds, to defray any possible increase on a peace establishment. He was, contented to take upon himself the burden of 575,000*l.* without the lottery; and he confessed he did not see any shape in which he could put that yearly sum as an increase to the public taxes, without making a further appeal to the spirit and resources of the country, but he had the satisfaction to think, that in the tax he should propose, he had little fear from any disappointment of its produce.

NEW DUTY ON WINE.

Gentlemen would recollect, that in the course of the last year he had proposed, that there should be a considerable addition to the duty on wine, and with respect to any obligation for

limiting this tax, he thought it a matter of prudence; he did not immediately see any other limit than that there should not be too great an inducement leading to fraud and abuse, and also on the probability of diminishing its consumption. He confessed, that in the present instance he felt no anxiety on either of these heads on the question of finance. The diminution in the consumption of wine would naturally lead to an increase in the consumption of other liquors which might be more beneficial to the country in other respects, and perhaps equally productive to the revenue. The system of the excise laws he was confident was capable of repressing all frauds internally, and with respect to a clandestine importation, it never could prevail to any great extent; as to the danger of a decrease in the consumption, he felt no anxiety on that account, because he found that the last tax, instead of operating to promote that decrease, had on the contrary been attended with an increased consumption of that article. He thought therefore that a further duty to the same amount would not make it necessary for any gentleman to save his money by altering the consumption. It was, he said, a striking and important fact, that in the course of twelve months, from the imposition of the duty (deducting the sum raised by the duty attaching on the stock in hand, which amounted to the sum of 320,000*l.*) it had yielded the sum of 600,000*l.* upon 30,000 tons of wine at 20*l.* per ton. It appeared that the quantity imported during the last year was 30,000 tons. He did not believe that any defalcation whatever would arise; and therefore he thought himself justified in stating the amount of the increased duty on the same quantity as that of last year, and it was peculiar to the nature of this tax that if he touched it at all, he could not propose less than what he had charged it with before. He therefore meant distinctly to propose to the House that a tax which would make 6*d.* a bottle to the consumer, should be imposed — This would amount to 20*l.* per ton, exactly the same as the former tax, and would produce annually 600,000*l.* The committee would recollect that he had stated, that he would find it proper to have a sum in ready cash, to pay the Bank their share of the navy debt, &c. He should, therefore, as the tax would operate immediately on the consumer, think it necessary also to make it attach, like the former tax, immediately on the vender. The quantity of the stock in hand, under the operation of that tax, would produce probably (though it could not be easily ascertained) 320,000*l.* but which he now thought proper to calculate at between 350,000*l.* and 300,000*l.* From 900,000*l.* to 1,000,000*l.* would

would therefore be the produce of the present year of the sum permanently necessary to defray the sum borrowed; a considerable portion would not be paid in the present year, particularly on extraordinaries; there would therefore be a large surplus of cash in the present year, applicable to the purposes before stated.

THE LOAN.

He next thought it his duty to lay before the committee the terms upon which he had been enabled to raise so large a sum of money as seven millions and an half, under all the circumstances of the war. These were as follow:

£. s. d.		£. s. d.
120 0 0	3 per cent. consols, at 67, amount- ing to - - - - -	80 8 0
25 0 0	3 per cent. reduced, at 66 - - - - -	16 10 0
0 5 6	long annuities, which, at 18½ years purchase, amounted to - - - - -	5 1 9
		101 19 9

making a *bonus* of only 1l. 19s. 9d. the least, he believed, that had been ever given for any loan in this country. To this was to be added, half the usual discount, in consequence of the more rapid payment of instalments, which were all to be completed in half a year from the present time, the amount of the discount, which might be stated at the rate of three *per cent. per annum*, or at the rate of about 1l. 7s. being added to the surplus, above the state of the funds, made, in the whole, a *bonus* of 3l. 6s. 9d. on the loan of seven and a half millions, the stocks having been taken at the full market price of the day. These terms, so advantageous in themselves, were also made subject to the discretion of the House, if it should think proper to avail itself of a further loan to the Emperor of three millions; and the terms made too at a time when the people were disappointed in the hopes of peace, and the cup dashed from their lips by the proud, unjustifiable, domineering pretensions of the Executive Directory of the French Republic. The terms being so low and favourable, were, he contended, a collateral and indeed a strong practical circumstance, which proved demonstratively the flourishing state of our resources, and the confidence of the monied men. This, he said, went beyond the theoretical speculations of gentlemen on the other side of the House, and spoke the true state of the country to Europe and to the whole world. There were however, still stronger proofs of the solidity of public credit and national security: the aggregate amount of the taxes had produced in

the first year of the war an increase above the produce in peace (with the operation of taxes then laid on of 252,000*l.*) the sum of 208,000*l.* and in the year 1795 with the operation of taxes to the amount of 1,952,000*l.* laid on in that year, to an increase of 1,648,000*l.* above the taxes of the year before. Another collateral circumstance attendant on the revenue in this war, which did not happen in former wars, was that the taxes came up to the full amount of the estimates. These were circumstances which he felt a sincere joy in being able to give the House as strong positive proofs of the true credit and resources of the country; it was true the taxes last year had a temporary increase, which would not be a permanent one, he meant the duty on the stock of wine in hand; when peace should be established, there would be no doubt but that they would be permanently productive up to the full amount of the estimates, and sufficient to defray all the charges upon them.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer next examined the present state of the permanent revenue of this country; he would not, he said, consider the average of the four last years of peace; as was the custom, he would take it permanently on the averages of the three years of the war; from such a view of the subject it would appear that the revenue of this country, exceeded by above 300,000*l.* a year, the calculation of sixteen millions a year, which was supposed to be necessary to meet the peace establishment of this country; nor was that all: the lottery would produce 300,000*l.* annually, applicable also to any contingent increase on a peace establishment, which resource the country would not part with, unless they could find a proper substitute.

Another resource of 500,000*l.* a year from the East India company, was to be reckoned upon which, though not paid during the war, would be applicable to the public service in peace, the great interests created to the company, together with the glory and advantage arising to this country, and which he was happy to consider as the effect of the exertions of his honourable friend (Mr. Dundas), who had managed them with wisdom and success. This revenue of 500,000*l.* might also be stated as part of the solid and permanent revenue of this country. It was next necessary for him to state the imports and exports in the most flourishing year of peace that ever occurred in the history of this country, he meant in the year 1792, they amounted to 29,509,000*l.* and in the year 1795, the third year of the war, they amounted to 27,270,000*l.* In a commercial country what need he desire further than if they

they were under the necessity of making great exertions, to find that the credit of the country was high, and its pecuniary resources were great?

The growing commerce of the country had been fully established, and flourished without even the possibility of a rivalry. In every other war, a perpetuity of taxes had been the consequence; in the event of the present contest, however, posterity would be happily relieved from the burdens which our ancestors, with all their wisdom, have laid upon us. So far had we been from adding any thing to the permanent debt of the nation, that we have, on the contrary, added to the sinking fund a sum of between 7 and 800,000*l*. What he proposed to lay on, did not make the taxes perpetual, but converted them into an annuity, and that capable of being liquidated at no very remote period. The ratio of interest had also been cheaper by one and a half *per cent.* than during the last war. How have these prosperities happened? Because we have adhered to the old sinking fund, and added to the new sinking fund an increasing sum of gradual liquidation, which will save to the country a perpetual tax of 4,000,000*l*. for the expence of this war, and convert it into an annuity that must be redeemed in 40 or 50 years. If the same exertions had been made on the part of our ancestors, he would leave it to the House, what great and essential benefits would they not have conferred upon their descendents. Was it not a subject of exultation to us, that we were enabled to go out of the war with a sinking fund, bearing a proportion to that in four years of peace, double of what that sum bore then to the debt at that time? gentlemen had talked of the present pressure by its comparative greatness with that of other wars. But was that a fair, was it a candid comparison? They should compare the present pressure with the prosperity and the vast improvement of the country in its extensive commerce, its agriculture, and its manufactures. What then would be the result? That though the pressure was certainly great, yet it was fully provided against by the vast resources of the nation, which never had a parallel in this or any other country.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer apologized for taking up so much of the attention of the House, but he could not he said, resist the impulse he felt to shew, that nothing should discourage us from persevering in a war whose end was so laudable, and which involved our dearest and most complicated interests. He did not mean to allude to a late transaction (Mr. Pitt meant the proposal of Mr. Wickham to the Directory, and their rejection of all terms of treating) but
he

he was convinced from the abject manner in which the resources of this country had been stated by gentlemen, that the enemy considered themselves warranted in keeping up their haughty tone, in dictating terms to this country. Their views were evidently taken from the opinions industriously circulated of our distresses, and they built their presumptuous hopes on the want of provisions in this country, and its pecuniary distress. The scarcity of provisions, however, vanished, while that proud message was on its way, and the pecuniary want would instantly disappear, in consequence of the just and effectual measures which the House was about adopting. With respect to the want of money under which the enemy sunk, he thought it unnecessary to notice it much. He would not discuss the downfall of their *assignats*, nor follow them through their various and eccentric transformations. He would only trouble the House with a simple statement: On the 18th of March, before the negotiation took place, the Directory proclaimed to all Europe, that their sole resource was in their *mandats*. They publicly admitted, that if their currency was at less than par, or if they suffered any depreciation, the republic was completely ruined. They declared, they could be saved by the *mandats*, and by them alone. What was the result? The system of terror was once more revived by a message from the Directory, that message was followed by the successive depreciation of the *mandats*, till they fell at length to 82, *per cent.* in value. "The ultimate issue of the contest (exclaimed the Chancellor of the Exchequer) must be glorious, if we are not wanting to ourselves. We shall, by the blessing of Providence, deliver ourselves from the worst of dangers, and at the same time transmit to posterity a most useful lesson, that a bankrupt, turbulent, and lawless nation, cannot measure itself with the spontaneous and well-regulated conduct of a free and loyal country."

Mr. Grey said, "If instead of coming forward with a budget for the third time in the course of fourteen months, if instead of coming forward to impose new burdens, and to levy fresh taxes upon the people, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had come down, stating the situation of the country to be such as to enable him to alleviate its present distress, and to relieve it from some of the existing imposts; if, instead of making if not an avowed, at least a real admission, that, in the beginning of the session, he had deceived the House of Commons, and the country, by mis-stating the demands of the public service, he had been enabled to say, that by a diminution of the necessities of the state, an alleviation of the public

public burdens was become practicable; if, instead of having blotted the annals of the country, and tarnished the glory of the present reign, he had brightened the regal diadem, and furnished an epoch of British history exempt from misfortune and distress, then the honourable gentleman might, with some degree of justice, have assumed the air of triumph with which this evening he has so vainly attempted to cover his inability and misconduct. On this day of humiliation to the country, and to the House of Commons, I did expect a confession of contrition becoming his situation. Whatever may have been the style in which his statements have been made, he has been compelled, by the vigilance of individuals, to come forwards with an explanation, which the House of Commons never thought it worth while to demand, to confess if not in words, at least virtually and in effect, that formerly he had not fairly and candidly unfolded the true state of affairs, to avow to that House of Commons that had dismissed, without inquiry, every proposition that had been stated, every fact that had been maintained upon the subject of finance, that it was now necessary to adopt some measure to remedy the mischiefs which the folly of his conduct had occasioned, and to acquiesce in the existence of evils, which, but for the prudent conduct of others, might have produced the most fatal consequences. The Bank, by withdrawing their discounts, had forced him to the declarations which he has made this day, and if no other advantage should be derived from them, he hoped that they would convince the House of their error, in having reposed such implicit confidence in his former statements. I shall not follow him through all the declamation with which his speech was interspersed; and I cannot help regretting, that in a business where a plain account ought to have been submitted to the House, he had so often recourse to exertions of eloquence.

"For the sake of argument I shall admit the flourishing state of our commerce, and the increase of our exports and imports, for abundant means will not justify an extravagant prodigality in the use of these means. In some instances his argument has been fallacious. It is no uncommon practice, to prevent mistake, for merchants to enter the goods which they export oftener than once; and when it is taken into consideration, also, that the amount of the exports is considerably increased by the expenditure of the war of itself, his reasoning upon this head will not prove so conclusive as at first sight one might be apt to conclude. I shall not follow him, however, upon this general question, as an increased commerce affords

no excuse for an increased extravagance; nor will it ever supersede the necessity imposed by their duty upon the House of Commons, of inquiring into the amount, and the fairness of the burthens to which their constituents are subjected. I own that on the present occasion I offer myself to the attention of the House under circumstances of some disadvantage, after the stream of language which has now flowed from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of which he must be acknowledged to have such command; I shall, however, attempt to give a representation of the state of the country, which will certainly differ materially from his, but which, if not so favourable, will perhaps be more correct.

“The honourable gentleman complained that exaggerated statements had been given of our financial embarrassments, and that these statements had suggested to the enemy that haughty answer which they had lately made to certain pacific overtures on the part of this country. Upon this subject I shall not enter at present. I shall only say that the result was just what I expected. In the first place there was much reason to doubt the sincerity of the British Cabinet, and certainly the manner in which the business was conducted, was not such as tended to remove any unfavourable impression which the French might have taken from the former conduct of the king's ministers. Upon the reply of the directory I shall say nothing. If the honourable gentleman, or any of his friends shall think proper to submit the subject to the consideration of the House, I shall be prepared to deliver my sentiments, and to point out that line of conduct, which, in my humble apprehension, it would be proper to pursue. To return to the subject of finance. If the honourable gentleman means, in talking of these false statements which have made much to the disadvantage of the country, to allude to any thing that I have advanced upon a former evening, I will appeal to the House, if he has not demonstrated the necessity of what I proposed, and if his conduct this evening has not been a fulfilment of my prediction. I proposed to institute an inquiry into the state of our finances; he has shewn that inquiry to be more necessary than ever. I affirmed the provision made for the expences of the year, extravagant and enormous as it was, to be inadequate to the demands of the service. He has acknowledged the assertion to be true. Are we however really in this state, that independent members of parliament, who do not chance to be connected with his Majesty's councils, who have not the fortune to live in the sunshine of royal bounty, cannot come forward in the House of Commons

to

to attack the crimes, or to expose the faults of administration, without subjecting himself to the imputation of being actuated by sinister motives, and having a view to unwarrantable ends? Such a reflection was not so much an aspersion upon the individual as an imputation upon the House. Leaving these general topics, I proceed to notice the expences incurred since the opening of the Budget, and the means that have been proposed for defraying them.

“With regard to the tax upon dogs, which has been substituted instead of one on cottons, I have little to remark. If the tax can produce 100,000*l.* a year, I have no objection to its taking effect. When I consider the nature of the Bill, however, which has been brought in, I am not very sanguine about the amount of the produce of the tax. One clause, in particular, is ludicrous in the extreme; I mean that which exempts any person from punishment who may be found killing, or converting to his own use dogs who have not paid the tax. If, however, the tax, in spite of such ridiculous provisions in the Bill, shall be found productive, I shall be glad, thinking, as I do, that it is a fair and proper source of revenue. I must confess that I was not a little struck with the estimates for unprovided services, which have occurred since the last budget. The additional extraordinaries of the army were estimated at 535,000*l.* The demands for the Ordnance at 200,000*l.* The expence of barracks at 267,000*l.* The deficiency of the Civil List, arising from sums applied to secret services, at 100,000*l.* And the estimated deficiency of taxes at 177,000*l.* Amounting in all to 1,279,000*l.* When I consider the extent of these new demands, I cannot help reflecting upon the time of opening the budget last year, and the circumstances which have since taken place. In February 1795 the Chancellor of the Exchequer received a loan of unparalleled extent. In September he was obliged to have recourse to new and unusual modes of raising money. In December he came forward with a Budget, in which he assured the House and the country that he had made abundant provision for all the expences of the ensuing year. Since that time no unforeseen necessities have arisen, no new demands have occurred to justify the imposition of fresh burdens upon the people. He then calculated upon the hostile disposition of the enemy, and the continuance of the war, neither of which are the discoveries of yesterday, and therefore cannot furnish any apology for the exorbitant demands which he has this day made. He has this day boasted in the committee that he not shrink from a clear explanation of the demands of the public service, to their full extent, and claimed

a considerable share of credit for his ingenuoufness, in coming forward and stating all the provisions which the different exigencies of affairs in the course of the ensuing year may require. The principle he approved, and the line of conduct he allowed to be proper. The principle however which was just at this day, was equally just in December last, and the mode of acting which was right in introducing the present budget, was equally right in opening the last, whereas, on that occasion, he neither made any provision for the extraordinaries of the army, nor for funding the navy debt.

“This brings me to the subject of unfunded debt, and here the right honourable gentleman went into a large discussion upon the evils arising from a great quantity of unfunded debt, as if he himself had not been the cause of the evil of which he complained. His statement, however, upon this subject, differs widely from one with which I shall trouble the committee. After proposing to fund a certain proportion of navy debt, he would leave unfunded only 1,640,000*l*. This statement he gets at by calculating every year the extent of the debt, and providing for a part which he deducts from the gross amount; but the question is, whether or not the provisions have answered his expectation? I have a very different statement to make. In 1794 there was funded about 1,500,000*l*. and 1795, 1,600,000*l*. and on the 31st of December last, there remained due for navy service 12,335,000*l*. including 10,350,000*l*. incurred in the course of the last year. So that, though the taxes turned out as productive as was expected, there would be left unprovided for, instead of 1,640,000*l*. near 7,000,000*l*. This event, however, rests upon the supposition of the taxes answering the minister's expectation, which I must confess is, in my view, a supposition rather too sanguine. Last year the tax upon the stock of wine in hand amounted to 320,000*l*. which reduced the net produce of the tax, exclusive of the stock in hand, to 312,000*l*. In opposition to this statement he sets up, that the taxes have not yet existed a complete year, and that the returns from which the estimate was made must be short of their real value. I must however remind him, that if some of the taxes did not take place till midsummer, others had commenced in February, so that, if he had only eight months of some he had fourteen months of others.

“I must confess, that in my opinion, his expectations of the produce of the wine tax, are unwarrantably high. He thinks that as much wine will be consumed as before. Upon the quantity of wine which may be consumed, every man is at

liberty to speculate as he pleases; but I think it would be unreasonable to reckon upon a greater revenue from the tax than was derived from it last year, including the stock on hand; the consequence of which would be, that a very small part of the debt would be provided for. The honourable gentleman also entered into a statement of the probable addition to the navy debt, in the course of the ensuing year. I know not on what grounds he proceeded in this statement, as they must be essentially different from those on which he was accustomed to act in former years. Formerly he used to estimate the probable debt of the ensuing year, from the known amount of the debt of the preceding year, and in these cases the fact always exceeded the estimate. How then comes he to estimate the navy debt of the next year at only 4,000,000*l.* when the debt of last amounted to 10,000,000*l.* I admit that the peculiar circumstances of last year, might tend to swell the navy debt to an uncommon amount, but certainly these circumstances never can authorise such a disproportion of the estimate. If the honourable gentleman had fulfilled his boast to the public, and acted with that manliness and fairness, the credit of which he claimed, he should have provided interest for at least 14,000,000*l.* So that even now, after all we had heard of a superabundant provision for expences, some of which we were taught to believe had no existence, there was out-standing debts to a great amount, which still remained unprovided for, and for the existing arrears in the civil list, there are no means of providing but by applying those grants which have been made by parliament for other purposes to their discharge. instead, therefore, of the high and lofty tone that he has assumed, the minister had come down praying for a bill of indemnity for his errors, extravagance and misconduct, he would have acted in a manner becoming his situation. The army I know to be in arrear. The civil list is no less than five quarters in arrear; every department of the state has suffered from the mismanagement of its conductors, and now, when the chancellor of the exchequer has found himself compelled to make new demands, boasting as he has done, of having freely disclosed the utmost extent of the state necessities; even now I say, in this third budget, in the course of fourteen months, he has neglected to make provision for acknowledged deficiencies. I therefore call upon this committee to go into an inquiry into the state of the finances; and if the honourable gentleman, instead of fine speeches, will only furnish me with a few papers, I will pledge myself to shew that, notwithstanding the enormous loan of twenty-five millions which has been voted, he has not provided interest for the out-standing debt. Be-

fore I sit down, I must advert to what he urged in allusion, I suppose, to something that I advanced on a former evening, respecting the probable amount of a peace establishment, and which I am now prepared both to re-state and to defend. I then estimated the peace establishment at 16,800,000*l.* to which, if you add the interest of the capital of the debt contracted since the war, amounting to 2,600,000*l.* one million for the interest of unfunded debt, some allowance for an increased half-pay list, and the expence of barracks, together with 200,000*l.* which I suppose will always be continued as a sum for liquidating the debt, the peace establishment cannot be estimated at less than twenty-two millions. Now, let us consider, for a moment, the means that we have to support this establishment. The net produce of the taxes, last year, amounted to 15,735,876*l.* which, together with the land and malt, estimated at about three millions, will make out a standing annual revenue of nineteen millions, still leaving 2,500,000*l.* a year to be provided for by annual permanent taxes. Perhaps the honourable gentleman may object to my taking the estimate of the produce of the taxes from a year of war. But the objection is entirely without foundation, because, instead of diminishing, the war has rather tended to increase the public revenue. At the close of the American war, the revenue did not rise by the operation of peace, but by the accumulation of taxes, so that there is nothing either in history or our own experience, that can warrant our supposing that the taxes will be more productive on the return of peace, than they are at present. I have stated these observations to the committee, not, as has been insinuated, to depreciate the state of our finances, or to give the enemy cause of exultation and triumph, but to induce the house, upon finding this admitted error *prima facie* in the statements and calculations of the chancellor of the exchequer, to institute an enquiry into the subject, that they may see the real dangers attendant upon that situation to which the country is reduced. I must here also deprecate all comparison between the situation of this country and that of France, as such comparison must infallibly lead to error. Such comparisons have been the means of deluding the people of this country into a contest which has been conducted without ability, and which the present ministers can never terminate with honour. I leave it entirely to the judgment of the house; but if they will go into a committee of enquiry, I pledge myself to prove, that even now the demands of the public exigences have been only partially stated, and that the interest of public debt, to a great amount, still remains unprovided for."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to reply. He said he would trouble the house, if it would grant him indulgence, for the purpose of making a few observations on those points urged by the honourable member, which he conceived to be of the most importance. Their calculations had differed materially; in the first instance the honourable gentleman asserted that the navy debt incurred in 1795 amounted to near ten millions. Instead of such increase, he maintained that the sum incurred for that period amounted only to six millions; by this account the honourable gentleman was in error at least three millions, for the interest of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer insisted that provision had been made. On the 31st December 1791, the total navy debt was 2,300,000*l.* at the end of 1795 the debt amounted to twelve millions, this certainly made a difference of near ten millions, but as it is impossible, and absurd, to suppose that the latter sum was incurred during the year 1795, so far the blame imputed to him by the honourable gentleman must vanish before the fact. The navy debt for 1796, he calculated at four millions; but the honourable member, drawing his inferences from his own statements, assumed to himself the fact that it ought to be double that sum; that was a proposition to which he could not agree, though it were not possible but there might be some variation in the navy debt, more or less, but not however to an amount as great as four millions. It had been asserted that he kept back the expenses, because he could not foresee the increase of 150,000*l.* which he maintained was the whole amount of the sum in dispute; in the year 1795, however, he must remind the house that many circumstances had occurred, not likely to occur in the present year; leaving out of the question the expenses incurred by the misfortunes encountered by the West India fleet, there was to be added to the expenditures of the last year, the extraordinary and great expence occasioned by the purchasing and fitting out the East India ships, which made a powerful addition to our naval strength, but was an expence that would occur again in 1796. In addition to this, from the prospect of the harvest, he had reason to hope that the article of victualling for the present, would be much less than it had been the preceding year. The honourable gentleman had said, that the new loan was for new services in the excess of expences; it was plain however that only two millions and a half of the new loan was to be expended on additional services. Five millions were to be laid out in funding, three and a half in exchequer bills, and the remainder in the consolidated fund. Consequently only two and a half was given to new services.

He

He had not counted on the lottery as an article of revenue, but he substituted taxes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proved by calculation that Mr. Grey was mistaken in his argument upon the produce of the taxes. The mode of arguing, *viz.* that of comparing one quarter of the year with another, was erroneous; the hair powder tax, for instance, was collected for the most part in the first quarter, while other taxes remained outstanding til near the close of the year.

He next called the attention of the House to the prohibition of the distilleries, which occasioned a falling off, on an average, of one-third of the duties, but this accidental defalcation would be retrieved, and the duties on the fair average of four years, previous to the last year were in a progressive state of improvement. The honourable gentleman was under an error, if he conceived he had stated that the 500,000*l.* arising from the East India Company, besides the 300,000*l.* arising from the Lottery, was ample for the increase of the peace establishments. We could not actually discuss the future peace establishments, which must necessarily depend on circumstances: there evidently, however, was one million to spare to meet future expences, when that happy period took place. The honourable gentleman had taken the year 1788 as the probable establishment, which, he took it, was a bad one to ascertain our future establishment. The House, if they considered the several circumstances which he had submitted, though from the complexion of them, perhaps not sufficiently in detail, would plainly see that he had stated resources sufficient to meet all future probable, or he might say possible exigencies. When it thus appeared that there was one million to spare which might go to the peace establishment, supposing that happy period to take place in December 1796, and as he before stated that there was beside 500,000*l.* unfunded navy debt, and 300,000*l.* Lottery (which he did not mean to state as part of the resources,) it shewed that the honourable gentleman was inaccurate in his statements. The Chancellor of the Exchequer then entered into detail, to shew that the hon. gentleman had much miscalculated the probable peace establishment, even upon his own principles; and concluded by shewing, that there were resources sufficient to answer all future demands which could be foreseen.

Mr. Fox said, he should not on the present occasion trouble the committee much at length. He had no wish to enter upon many of the points which had been touched upon by the right honourable gentleman opposite to him, because they had been so ably and fully discussed by his honourable friend: he could

not,

not, however, help congratulating the House on one circumstance, which was, that, if they could believe the minister, they would always be in a prosperous state. They had been stated to be in a happy condition when there was plenty of money in the kingdom; they had been stated also to be in a prosperous state when there was a scarcity. Therefore we had this consolation, that whether there be a plenty or a scarcity, we had a minister who assured us that either the one or the other was a proof of our happiness, a stamp of public prosperity. We had full proof of this from the speech of the minister that night, compared with what he had said on former occasions. That right honourable gentleman had observed, that if we looked at the balance of trade now, it was much in our favour. He said also, that in considering the expence of the present war, we should conclude it to be more expensive than other wars, merely because more money was expended; we should consider also, that all the articles of life, the consumption of which must take up so great a part of the expence of war, as well as the price of every thing for which money was taken in exchange, was considerably higher than at any former period. If this reasoning were correct, as certainly it was, it must infallibly apply to our imports, and our exports; and some just reflections might thence arise with regard to our exports to happen from what he expected he always entertained doubts of the accuracy or justness of the conclusions of the hon. gent. when he stated them to the House. He would ask, whether or not our subsidy to the King of Prussia, our loan to the Emperor, made any part of our exports? Did they, or did they not, make part of those very exports on account of which we plume ourselves so highly? He did not know much on the subject. He knew nothing to the contrary of these making part of our exports. He suspected they did.

With regard to the general topics which the minister had brought forward that night, he must observe that this was not the proper time to discuss them. Nor was it the most fit to discuss the merit of what had passed between the executive government of this country and that of the French republic. He with his honourable friend, and with him, should he be ready to deliver his opinion upon that subject, at the only time when that could be regularly asked of him, and when his opinion could be alone serviceable to this country, if at all, viz: the time when the whole of that subject should come fully and fairly before the House. He believed the period was not far distant when that opportunity would occur; he was sorry to observe, however, that what the minister had advanced upon that

that subject was not consoling, for while our burdens were rapidly increasing, our hopes of a speedy conclusion to the cause of that increase were very much diminished; this, however, was also a topic for general discussion.

With regard to taxes, he was ready to say he agreed with the minister as to the principle of the wine tax, that an addition of a round sum would not be more burdensome to the public at large than a fraction would be; he agreed also with his honourable friend upon this subject, that it was not likely to be so productive as the minister had estimated it. As it was, however, a matter of conjecture rather than any thing else, he did not wish to say much upon that subject at present. He thought the minister had stated the difference between him and his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) pretty plainly. The difference between them was not five millions but three millions. He nevertheless thought that the difference between them upon the computation of interest, was more than the minister stated it to be. Conscious that his authority and the authority of others on the same side of the House, were likely to be less attended to in that House, than the authority of the minister, he wished his honourable friends to be cautious as to what they advanced upon such subjects as related to finance, and he would be so himself. In fact they generally were so; they founded their observations chiefly on the experience of facts, while the minister for the most part took computations on expectation. He told the House what was actually to happen. Whereas, he and his honourable friends only presumed to conjecture what was likely to happen from what they knew had happened. Thus his honourable friend had conjectured what the produce of the taxes would be by knowing what they had been, and then he had considered how much would be applicable to the payment of the present loan after providing in the usual way for the sinking fund. The minister was pleased to go into a calculation of the committees who had considered and made their report on the finances and expenditure of this country. His honourable friend had done otherwise, he had taken experience for his guide upon this subject. He certainly was not wrong in the course he took, since before the calculation of the first committee came to be realised, another committee was formed, who differed from the first. A third might have differed from the second, had a third been appointed, and therefore his hon. friend was right in the course he took. Why did his honourable friend take the year 1788 for his standard. Because it was the medium year. But the minister said this was an extraordinary peace establishment. Was it not likely that such an extraordinary
peace

peace establishment would happen again? He would say that his honourable friend took a fair peace establishment, when he took the year 1788. It was taken as the average of four years, after six years peace. He should be glad to know what reason we had to expect such a long interval of peace. God knew he wished it; but he could not cherish any hopes of enjoying it for any very long period of time, especially under the system which our government at present pursued. Therefore his honourable friend was right in taking the year 1788 for his calculations and observations. Had he taken 1789 or 1790, the case would have appeared still more unfavourable on our part. Consequently his honourable friend had taken the subject as a man of his good sense must be expected to take it, upon facts as he found them, not upon the opinions of any committee, for the one of them had differed from the other, and for aught he knew, a third might differ from the second committee, as much as the second did from the first. His honourable friend had followed the moderation which he observed on a former night, when he moved for a committee to inquire into this subject. What he had stated to-night was founded on what he stated then. It was founded upon experience. Was there then a man in the House who would say, that the peace establishment would be as low as the minister had stated it that day? What did his honourable friend state the peace establishment of this country to be on a former night, supposing no further expence to be incurred—Twenty-two millions. He would not state it to be so at this time; for by the vote about to be proposed, they were called upon to add to the public revenue by adding to the public burden; and therefore his honourable friend would make an allowance for what was that night to be voted, when he again talked of the deficiency of the public income as compared with the public expenditure. He might possibly be asked, whether the measure about to be proposed by the minister was applauded? He would say he agreed to this measure of the minister, and was only in doubt whether he ought not to go further. What had his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) done, when he moved for a committee to inquire into these points? He had stated the effect which the minister's then system had and must have on the credit of the nation. He called on the House to perform its duty by instituting an inquiry into the subject, as he then foretold what the minister himself had proved that night.—(Here the Chancellor of the Exchequer said *No.*)—"No!" said Mr. Fox, "I say it certainly was so." Indeed it was not then answered.

VOL. IV. 1796. T

there were many parts of his hon. friend's speech that were not answered. It was true his honourable friend did not call for a new loan, because the House were not ready for that, but he told them there was a large debt to be provided for, and that had been verified this night. It was true he was told then something like what had been hinted at this day, viz. that he was endeavouring to depreciate the finances of the country, when in fact he was not doing so, for it was not depreciating the finances of a country to call on a branch of the legislature to attend to them. He was therefore only calling on that House to do its duty. The minister said the statement then made by his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) was not now the expenditure of this country. This was, what he always despised, a mere quarrelling with words. This would not now be the expenditure of the country it was true. Why? Because by the vote of this night some part of that expenditure was to be defrayed, for which purpose taxes are to be imposed upon the public. This was a new burden on the public. This the Chancellor of the Exchequer said was not a new necessity. True it was not a new necessity. But it was a new discovery of the minister, or rather it was an avowal of what the minister knew and felt long ago must come on the public, which he did not wish to inform the public of sooner. If the public were called upon, as certainly they were that day, to defray six *per cent*, instead of three and an half, was not that calling on them to bear two and an half *per cent*. new burden? The minister might indeed say, it was not new to him, it was only a new discovery, a new avowal, or new conviction of his. A part that he did not chuse to state before the public or to the House of Commons. He was now disposed to state the fact a little more fully than before. He would say, therefore, that if the House of Commons had done its duty before, this business would have been manifested to the public long ago. If it be true they must go into the subject now, why did they not go into it before? Why did they wait until the king's minister was convinced of the necessity of that which he says he now sees, and who seems to see a little later than others upon this subject, for he had only seemed to see this necessity now, whereas he had, as well as the House, been told of it long ago?

He had heard, Mr. Fox said, some things upon French finance that night, which he did not think very rational. He had heard a good deal said of the mandates of that country, in depreciation of them. He had heard of the depreciation of assignats, that they were at a discount of eighty-

two *per cent.* and now mandats were said to be some where about the same condition, or perhaps at eighty-four *per cent.* discount. That French finances have long been, and now are so deplorable, that no other can be compared to them, he was ready to admit. But he could not forget, that year after year this country had been persuaded to go from peace, wealth, prosperity, and security, into war, adversity, and danger, upon account of the state of the French assignats, as they were stated to be from time to time. These assignats, whatever might have been their state at some former period, were now annihilated. So may their Mandats, and something else may succeed them of which we can know nothing. He should therefore hold to the House a lesson of caution upon this subject; they were no nearer the conquest of the French than when they were issuing these assignats which were at this time annihilated. Being deluded once, the House should take care that they were not deluded again—at least by the same artifice. Let them ask what would have been the situation of this country, if they had not listened to the depreciation of these assignats? When Flanders and Holland were not in possession of the French, what would have been the difficulty of making peace with the French, compared with the difficulty which we feel at present? Let us not, therefore, be deluded in the same way as we had been deluded already upon assignats. Let us not be dupes to the same imposture, and that from the same impostors, and from whom we had suffered so severely already, and that the more especially when we find that the minister has involved us in a situation so intricate, that he cannot guess at the opening of a budget, within seven millions and a half how much he shall have occasion to call upon us for in the course of one session of parliament. These were the facts, and such was the melancholy experience which we had before us; and they were verified by the proceedings of this day, not by argument, but by what was much more forcible, a chain of events; facts and melancholy experience, and for which we are now suffering. He hoped, therefore, this would have some effect upon the House. They were now however told that, with respect to the condition of the French mandats, we had the opinion of the French directory itself. This had not the advantage of being new, or if new, it was only so in name; the term Directory was new, but the substance of the argument had sufficiently deluded the House and the public already, under the head of assignats. Much vehemence of language had been employed upon former occasions, to shew to that House the desperate situation of the French finances. They

had been told then something like what they had heard to-night:—"Hear what the French say themselves, and see whether they are not in their last agony." They had been told, with a distinctness which was not very common in metaphorical language, "That the French were not on the verge, but in the gulph of bankruptcy." God forbid we should fight a country under the hope, and no other, that such a country was in the gulph of bankruptcy. Nothing could be got from such a contest. By such folly we had added to the capital of our enormous debt, from thirty to forty millions in the course of a little more than a year. It was a dreadful burden on the people in any case; what must it be in such a case as this?

The case was a remarkable one, and ought to create in the House some distrust and diffidence in the assertions of ministers. These very people of France who were in the gulph of bankruptcy a long time ago, had made it necessary for the minister to borrow seven millions more in the course of one session, than he said he had occasion for when he brought forward the public expenditure of the country. He considered the observations on the mandats of the French that night, as exactly of the same delusive nature with those that were made some time ago upon French assignats, as evidence of the speedy destruction of the system of the French Republic. An argument which had cost this country so much, and by which it had been so fatally deluded, that no man who wished it well could look at it without shuddering.

He was led in his view of the minister's speech to an important event, and which gave him great pleasure. It was matter of congratulation to every good man in this country. He meant the late reduction of the price of corn. It was matter of general joy. Let them not, however, think, that the reduction of the price restored the people to all their comforts, such as they enjoyed before this war. The price of corn was still most dreadfully high. English wheat, he understood to be that day from four pounds to four guineas a quarter. Though that was a price comparatively low with reference to what it had lately been, it was a tremendous price still, and such as afforded us no reason to think that the poor were not likely to feel great distress. We should also consider the price of other articles of food, particularly of meat. When we did so, we should find that the situation of the mass of the working part of the community was deplorable. It was such in truth, as to put an end to that noble independence which once constituted the boast of the English labourer,

labourer, who was now obliged in a great measure to rely on the bounty of those of a higher rank of life, for the support of himself and his family. Thus it was that the real vigour of the English nation would be destroyed. This was a point which called for the serious attention of the House.

With respect to the terms of the loan which the minister had opened to the House, he did not chuse to say much. The right honourable gentleman was under a difficulty in that particular. They had heard him say much in praise of a loan by open competition. That right honourable gentleman either was ignorant of the real situation of this country, when he made the last loan but one, or else he did it with his eyes open, and only endeavoured to impose upon the public, by imposing upon the House of Commons—because in defiance of his own principle he made that loan without competition. So he did the last. So, indeed, with all his affected attachment to open competition, he had done most of his loans of late, as not one-fourth of the money he had borrowed this war had been borrowed upon his plan of open competition. Mr. Fox entered into some calculations on the terms, and maintained, that the minister did not state to the House the money which the public lost on the discount on exchequer bills when this loan was agreed upon; in reality, the whole of that discount was a loss to the public, let the holders of such Bills be who they might. This he proved, by placing the objects in various points of view.

Another point, which he must take notice of, Mr. Fox said, was the arrears which government were under to various branches of the public service. He understood that even in the smallest pensions government were in arrear. Even the miserable pittance which was allowed to the miserable French emigrants, who existed from day to day upon that pittance, and whom we had so scandalously deluded, was not punctually paid. He understood that this paltry allowance had been lately withheld. He was so informed, he did not insist that his information was authentic. It was easy to refute it if his information was erroneous. Had there not been delay in the payment of the army? Delay in the payment of the staff, as he had stated in that House on a former occasion, and on which he had made some remarks which had never been fairly, or at all answered? Delay in all the other branches of the public accounts, and in which payment ought to have taken place long ago? Did not parliament pass a Bill for the pay and cloathing of the militia; and was there not a day appointed in the Bill for that pay and cloathing, on purpose that no delay should

should take place? And did not ministers set the provision of the act at defiance, and pay at their leisure and convenience? These things he hoped would be inquired into hereafter. He would ask whether that House would not have better discharged their duty if they had agreed to the motion of his honourable friend for an inquiry into these things, instead of refusing that inquiry? He should indeed not only have agreed to that motion, but should also have returned thanks to his right honourable friend for moving it. But now we found that nothing was to be done until the clamour of individuals became so great, the minister found it inconvenient to pass it by in silence. The conduct of the Bank, he understood, had been very laudable upon the subject of our present pecuniary embarrassment. He would not say much on the insinuation of money being more plenty some time since than it was at present. That was a subject which was likely soon to occur again, and upon which it was not necessary to urge many arguments. On the opening of the budget before Christmas, he forgot one omission of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of which he was reminded by the speech of the right honourable gentlemen that night. It reminded him also of what an honourable friend of his had said to him upon that budget: That they had not heard the usual flourish on the course of exchange. The right honourable gentleman came forward with an account of the course of exchange being in our favour, that having returned to its natural channel. If the scarcity of money had been owing to the quantity of money going out of this country, that would reduce the course of exchange, of which the right honourable gentleman had boasted. He wished the right honourable gentleman to make out all he promised to the public, and therefore he wished him not to promise too much, because, if he was often faithless to his promise, the public would think that the more splendid his promises were, the more likely it was that he only made them to deceive. The right honourable gentleman in the course of his calculations that night, had considered himself entitled to great credit for taking the three years of war as a standard of our income in time of peace. He admitted indeed that it was probable; our commerce would increase in time of peace, and he hoped it would do so speedily and abundantly; he was perfectly sure, however, that it would not do so in the course of the first two or three years. Had it done so in the war which commenced in the year 1756 and ended in 1763² precisely the reverse. The years 1763 and 1764 did not increase in commerce on 1761 and 1762. Nor did the years

1783 and 1784 increase in commerce on 1781 and 1782. Indeed, it was perfectly clear, that war itself, from various reasons, tended to increase of exportation, and to increase for a while our manufactories, although it tended ultimately to destroy both, together with every thing else that was valuable in a country. This was evidently the case in former wars; and therefore the right honourable gentleman's calculation upon that subject was fallacious in the use which he attempted to make of it. Another observation suggests itself, which was, that this mode of calculation was erroneous in another view: all the causes which made war increase our exports, applied to this war more than any other, as the expence of it was more simple. Was that all? No. We had not only added thirty millions to our debt in the course of the year, but the taxes bore a greater proportion to the value of all the articles taxed, than they had ever done before; he did not see, therefore, ardently as he wished for peace, for the sake of the wealth of the Country, and even for the stability of its Constitution and the happiness of the People, that that peace would instantly increase the revenue, although ultimately he knew it would. This was therefore a serious business, since cruelly as the people of this Country were taxed, they must be taxed still more cruelly if the Government was to be supported. Having pointed out what he considered as delusions, which were held out year after year, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Fox concluded with observing that the public had a right to know what it was they were contending for, and what the real expence of that contention was, instead of both being, as hitherto they had been, enveloped in darkness.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he was sorry to be obliged to trouble the committee so often, and still to repeat what he had said before. Gentlemen seemed to dwell much upon the idea that they were voting seven millions and a half for new services, which really was not the case, as he explained in his former speech, and must contradict as often as it was stated. With regard to the Bank being so much in advance upon the Navy debt and the Exchequer Bills, gentlemen ought to recollect that there was nothing so new in it; and he would refer to the year 1783, when the right honourable gentleman was in office, the amount then was upwards of eleven millions. The Chancellor of the Exchequer again frankly confessed that the expences of the war had not a little contributed to the present scarcity of money, but he said, it did not solely arise from the expences, but from many other collateral circumstances, and he thought it unfair, that without taking into

con-

consideration the other causes to which it might be ascribed, our whole attention was singly directed to the gloomy side of the question. Neither was it remembered that the Austrian loan was not paid in money, but in Bills of Exchange, a circumstance which, with respect to the influx and efflux of specie, should be justly taken into account; it was also proper to observe, that in estimating the condition of the revenue, the Custom-House, in general, gave rather an inferior and imperfect account, than a swelled and exaggerated statement. Nor was the present state of trade more fairly stated; if articles of consumption were now dearer, it should not be forgotten that articles of export were dearer also. He agreed with the right honourable gentleman that the revenue could not be expected to increase very materially immediately on the restoration of peace, although there could be no doubt of a very great increase being the eventual consequence of an honourable and permanent peace, when such could be obtained. However, in following the right hon. gentleman in that part of his argument he could not help thinking that his opinions were altered very considerably. When the war commenced, the right honourable gentleman told the house that inevitable destruction, and total ruin must fall upon our trade, commerce and manufactures, if war was carried on; and now it appeared that if we had peace to-morrow our revenue would not be increased. As the right honourable gentleman seemed to think that war was the parent of commerce and industry, so the honourable gentleman held different opinions at different times, just as it best suited their arguments for the day. For his part if a safe, honourable, and permanent peace was restored to the country, he should look with sanguine hopes to a great increase of the revenue. An honourable gentleman opposite had stated the peace establishment at twenty-two millions; he stated that it could not, from any probable conjecture that he could calculate, exceed twenty-one. He could hardly admit the argument respecting the annihilation of assignats and the issuing of mandats in France being carried so far as the honourable gentleman had urged it. This last measure appeared their only one resource left, and these mandats must be taken at par. This issue took place in March, and in April they had fallen to one-twelfth of the value; he would then ask gentlemen if a greater contrast than this between the resources of this country and that could be exhibited? He had never accused any member of that house of wishing by his arguments to depreciate the resources of this country in the eyes of the enemy, though there were some points at issue, on subjects of finance,

finance, between them. He ascribed to no honourable gentleman improper motives, and he was happy to think that the solidity and extent of the resources of this country were so established in the opinions and knowledge of all Europe, as to leave it undisputed. He could say so much for the opinions circulated without doors. There certainly were those who anxiously and industriously circulated misrepresentations of our resources, and pointedly and precisely meant to depreciate the credit of the country and the conduct of government. This could not be denied, when they knew that in more than one of the public newspapers, for a length of time, misstatements and misrepresentations of our finances and resources, as well as exaggerations of the difficulties we had to contend with, were daily held forth in the broadest point of view, and certainly for no other purpose than mischief. He never could suppose that any member of parliament had the least correspondence or connexion with such conduct, but such it had been, and it became therefore his duty, by a fair and full detail of facts, to counteract the baneful effects of those licentious misrepresentations. With regard to the papers which gentlemen wished to move for, he would wait to hear what they had to say when those papers were produced; but by so saying he thought himself no ways bound to go into an enquiry. They might call, for he would promise discussion. As to the arrears, they could not be stated as a charge against the public, the votes already passed would sufficiently cover all demands under that head.

Mr. Fox said, he rose to correct the right honourable gentleman in one remark, which he had given as his, although he never had used the words, or could possibly entertain the sentiment. He had never said that war was the parent of commerce. What he did say was, that when the expenditure of fifty millions took place, in consequence of the existence of war, a great part of the money issued must revert, by different modes, back to the exchequer, and thereby in one shape increase the revenue, though it was an increase of no real advantage to the nation. In this point of view, therefore, a peace must reduce the revenue; and this was not merely theory, but founded on facts and experience, supported by what was known to be the state of the revenue at the conclusion of the two last wars. He said, with regard to exports, it was natural to suppose that in war time the merchants over-rated them, and the custom-house knowing that, stated them at less value.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had forgotten one thing,
VOL. IV. 1796. U which

which he wished to state—it had been observed that to the *bonus* on the loan ought to be added the discount on the exchequer bills, which were to be taken in part of payment. He must say that this was a very small part indeed, and was not in the hands of the contractors; 500,000*l.* of them were now in the hands of the bank, and it was not to be supposed, after the terms of the loan were known, that they would dispose of them under par.

Mr. Alderman Newnham said, he did not rise to oppose any part of the right honourable gentleman's speech, which he thought did great credit to himself and to the nation: what he meant was, to make some observations upon the loan, though not upon the terms of it. It was to all intents and purposes, and contrary to the approved system, a shut-up and close loan; and competition, to his knowledge, had been offered by fifteen or sixteen respectable houses in the city, and they had received no answer nor any reason why their offers were not attended to. Messrs. Boyd and Benfield seemed to have a sort of claim from the terms of the former loan; but, while they insisted on this claim for themselves, they denied it to others who had been subscribers to the former loan; thus refusing, to persons equally entitled, what they claimed to themselves. He again said, that it was not the terms he found fault with, but the monopoly that was established contrary to the system of fair and open competition, and producing inconveniences to many. He wished to know how long this was to last; and why this exclusive right to all government loans was invested in the present contractors?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer regretted that the manner in which the loan was made had given any offence, and stated the nature of the agreement which had been entered into with Messrs. Boyd, Benfield and Co. in December last, by which he was tied up from making any additional loan till all the payments were completed on that loan, and that more money being found necessary before that time expired than it was then expected would be wanted, he had no alternative but to close with the present contractors, whilst at the same time he hoped that the monied men in the city would become indirectly sharers in it. The present loan, as to the terms of it, was one of the few with regard to which he was the less sorry at having departed from the system of competition, inasmuch as there was no other set of men who had less inducement, from the scrip which they held, to raise the terms of this loan than the present contractors; and, whilst he, avowed the purity of

his motives, the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed his persuasion, that the terms of the loan would be found favourable, under the existing circumstances of the country.

Mr. Grey approved of what had fallen from the worthy alderman; and, to use a fashionable phrase, he should like to know when the *Loan Leviathan* was to be satisfied, or how long he was to have loans on his own terms? Ministers seemed anxious to accumulate all their pecuniary favours. He had also reason to suspect, that before the expiration of the term now mentioned, another loan would become necessary, and that the minister would be again compelled to apply to his friends Messrs. Boyd and Co. He repeated the difference between the right honourable gentleman and him, on the amount of the peace establishment, the navy debt, and the misapplication of money, contending, that his statements were established by facts, and the right honourable gentleman's only rested on speculation. He insisted, that, when money was voted by parliament for any specified purpose, it was a gross violation of law to appropriate it to any other, and a charge against any person, be he whom he may, that ought to be made the subject of an impeachment. There were one or two points on which he expected to have received, and the committee had a right to have some satisfactory answers. No notice had that night been taken of what had passed on a former occasion respecting the difference in the accounts respecting barracks? He wished likewise to know positively whether there was to be a loan of three millions to the emperor, because in the event, he would move for a call of the house; and lastly, if three millions of navy debt was to be funded, was the the last vote of credit for three millions of exchequer bills to be recalled or not?

Mr. Steele said, that in consequence of what had passed on a former night, he applied to the Barrack Master General, who had given this explanation; that about 243,000*l.* had been expended for barracks in Great Britain, 64,000*l.* for the islands of Jersey and Guernsey, and the few thousand pounds remaining for various articles that could not properly be classed under any of the descriptions in the account.

Mr. Grey complained of inaccuracy in the account, and Mr. Steele explained.

Mr. Sheridan begged the attention of the committee but for only a few minutes, declaring that he would not enter at large into the various topics that had been brought under consideration. He would first observe, that the complaint of monied men, at not being permitted to contribute their share to relieve the

necessities of the state, was a sufficient proof of the flourishing condition of our resources, and left no necessity for eloquence to declaim on the contrast between our situation, and that of the enemy. They were obliged to have recourse to violence to extort a forced loan, while monied gentlemen among us, with the generous impulse of patriotic magnanimity, were rivalling the Roman Curtius, and vying with each other who should first plunge into the unfathomable gulph of the Sinking Fund. Mr. Sheridan reminded the committee of the reasonings he had on former occasions urged on the subject of finance; the honourable gentleman however had always the victory of numbers with him, though he might refer him and the committee to these recorded opinions to which he is now at length obliged to come over. All declaration should be laid aside on the subject; because on a peace, not merely a surplus million, not only two millions and a half, but for more than three millions of new taxes will be necessary; and instead of the usual peace establishment of seventeen millions, he could prove, did not the lateness of the hour prevent him, that our future peace establishment would amount to no less a sum than twenty-three millions.

General Smith contended, that the East India Company would not be able to pay its part of 500,000*l.* He then adverted to the present state of our possessions in that country, and hinted, that a spirit of discontent and disobedience had been generated in the army there by our late regulations, and the report that had gone abroad of our intending to send out an army to enforce their acquiescence.

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, that when East India finances came under discussion, the honourable general would have a fair opportunity of stating the inability under which he supposed the East India Company to labour. As to the other insinuations thrown out by him respecting the disposition of the army in that country, they were wholly ungrounded, and he could not but consider them as a libel on those officers whose services the honourable general had so often spoken of in terms of the highest approbation.

General Smith explained, and vindicated himself from the imputation of libelling the East India officers and army; whose honour and interests, on the contrary, he said he should ever be proud to protect.

The resolutions were then put and agreed to without a division, and the report ordered to be received to-morrow. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, April 19.

Several Bills were received from the Commons.

The order of the day being read for the House to go into a committee on the Legacy Tax Bill,

The *Earl of Lauderdale* said, that having already opposed the principle of the Bill, it would not be thought that he meant to go into any examination of the clauses. To those noble lords who wished that the Bill should pass, he had only to say, that he could see much to amend in it; whenever it came to the third reading he would again trouble their lordships with his objections to the Bill. The Bill then went through the committee, and was ordered to be read a third time on Thursday the nineteenth instant, and the lords ordered to be summoned:

The *Marquis of Lansdowne* said, that more than a month ago he had moved for papers which had not yet been produced, although no objection had been stated in that House. He knew many of the gentlemen high in the offices from which they ought to come, and knew them to be men of great respectability and fit for their situations, particularly Mr. Irwin the Inspector General of the Customs, a more able, or a more intelligent and industrious officer did not exist; he could not suppose the blame of delay to lie with that gentleman or other officers, and therefore he was at a loss to account for the delay; he had no inclination to blame ministers, because, in the present state of alarm that the country felt on the subject of finance, he was sure they wished to give every information in their power. He only said thus much, because it was now late in the session, and full houses could not be expected.

Lord Grenville said, that as the papers in question did not come from any office in his department, he could not account for the delay, but he should certainly make inquiry, and do what he could to accelerate the production of those papers.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* moved for an account of all Bills drawn upon the Treasury in the month of December last, by whom drawn and accepted, and when payable. Ordered.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, April 19.

The Miller's Bill was read a third time and passed.

BARRACKS

24

Mr. Steele replied, that out of 314,000*l.* given in estimates, 246,000*l.* had been expended in temporary barracks in England, together with 4000*l.* of contingent expenses. In Guernsey and Jersey, for the same article, 64,000*l.* amounting in the whole to the sum estimated. These accounts were furnished in consequence of his orders to the barrack master, and he could not otherwise account for their accuracy, though he was free to confess his own belief, that they were fair and accurate. With regard to the distinction drawn by the hon. gentleman, he presumed it merely meant buildings which before had been erected, and, on the emergency, finished and used for temporary residences for the soldiers. For this first sort, the term barracks had been applied, and that of temporary barracks was, he believed, used for other buildings already made, and somewhat repaired for the reception of soldiers. He was not, however, entirely prepared, from his own knowledge, to speak with precision on the subject: as to the issues made by him, in his official capacity, he begged the honourable gentleman to observe, that he could not refuse to issue the money pursuant to the order of the Treasury, or the Secretary at War. With respect to some other expenses, he was not prepared to give any satisfaction; and he might, consistently with his place, decline giving any answer to such questions, if he did not feel himself called on in respect to the character of ministers.

[illegible]

Mr. Grey observed, that it was his duty, as a member of that House, to ask for every official information. He would not, however, then detain the House, as he should have occasion another day to go at large into the business.

Mr. Steele said, that being immediately called on, he was not prepared to speak with any precision on the business. Were he in possession of the necessary information, he was always ready to give every satisfaction in his power.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Mr. Hobart brought up the report of the committee of Ways and Means, when, upon the first resolution being put,

Mr. W. Smith stated, that he intended to have made some observations upon the terms of the loan the preceding night, but, on account of the great length of time occupied by other gentlemen, he was prevented. It was in the recollection of every gentleman, he presumed, that, after the last loan was contracted for, he moved a resolution of different import to that adopted by the House. As his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) had the preceding night termed it, the House were dragged through the mire to vote for that resolution. In whatever point of view the terms of former loans were considered, whether separately or comparatively with this, they would appear disadvantageous to the public. It was difficult to reconcile them, as there was at least a difference of three *per cent.* between them, which constituted a *bonus* to the contractors on the former. Though the coincidence of collateral circumstances did not always amount to mathematical demonstration, it amounted to presumptive proof, and thence he argued that the bargain for the old loan, for so it was to be distinguished, although so recently contracted for, was half a million unfavourable to the public, inasmuch as three *per cent.* more was given to the contractors than another gentleman would have taken it at, and the *bonus* upon it was exactly three *per cent.* more than the *bonus* upon this. It was necessary to inquire under what circumstances both the loans were bargained for, that the profit should be so much more at one time than another. When the *bonus* was given upon the old loan, it was to be remarked that thirty *per cent.* was paid upon it, that it was light and free from all burdens, which circumstance uniformly tends to depress the premium. If the parties therefore who purchase a loan, give less for one in April than they did in the preceding December, it was necessary to account for it. In the resolution, there was this expression, with
a view

a view to the magnitude of the sum borrowed. What was the magnitude? A premium of seven *per cent.* came out in the market upon it, without any rise in the funds, and with respect to the magnitude of the sum borrowed, it could only affect the terms of the loan. The question then was, how far such a sum could lower the funds more than this? The magnitude of the sum wanted, within one, two, or three million, was known before it was bargained for, and every effort was made use by the contractors to depreciate the stocks previous to the bargain. Long before the bargain was concluded it was known that there was a loan of 16 millions to be made. 'Twas true, the right honourable gentleman had given the market a temporary rise, by bringing down the King's message immediately after the loan was contracted for; but this favourable hope was of short duration; and at the time the new loan was made, the hope, which had been somewhat afloat ever since, was entirely destroyed by the answer of the Directory respecting peace.

It could not be upon that ground then, that the *bonus* was given. What were the grounds then? Was there any difficulty in raising the money? No, so far from it that three parties were known to have offered for it, if competition had been allowed. Was it on account of the state of the monied market at home? This was proved not to be the case, not only by the answer to the last proposition, but by the advantage being on the other side, in favour of the new loan, when a great scarcity of money is acknowledged. Did it arise then from the prospects of finance? No! the prospects were in favour of the public, since at that time sanguine expectations were entertained of peace, which now, comparatively speaking, were entirely and completely demolished. If these were the circumstances of the case, and he presumed no person would contend that they were not, every argument he used before, that a better bargain upon the old loan might have been made, was just and confirmed. He might appeal to every gentleman, or rather he would undertake to assure every gentleman, since few of them he apprehended were conversant in business of this nature, that if ministers had gone to open competition upon the old loan, they might have had it taken off their hands, by the very same contractors on the identical terms that they had taken this. If the two loans had been bargained for in two different years, and had no connexion with each other, the difference of premium might be allowed, but this last loan of seven millions and a half was the supplement to that of eighteen millions, and the payments were to be contemporaneous payments, or rather the payments upon the last loan were to be made in a shorter time

than the payments on the former. By this means, therefore, however the arguments of the difficulty of obtaining a loan of such magnitude might apply in the other case, they would not apply in the present; for the difficulties of paying the instalments on the old loan were increased by the additional instalments on the new, and *vice versa*. He did not mean to move any resolution to rescind the resolution proposed by an honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Douglas) not then present, but he conceived some better reason ought to be given by the House for having come to such a resolution.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, whether the honourable gentleman intended to bring forward a motion to rescind that resolution or not, it was in his own breast to determine; but if he were inclined to do it, he could not do so until the present motion was disposed of. What he had said, however, was no argument against the present question, but, on the contrary, it appeared that the present question was so good, that the other, comparatively viewed, was not so good as it ought to have been. He was extremely happy to find that the merit of the present loan received the approbation of so nice a critic; and therefore since they were unanimous, he concluded the best way would be to put their unanimity into action, and pass the resolution. In respect to the terms of the former loan, he was guided in his judgment by a general view of the circumstances existing at the time. Whether he drew his conclusions from right premises or not, the House had since had an opportunity to decide; if he had not, he reminded the honourable gentleman that all human efforts are liable to error. He had done for the best. When he bargained to so large an amount, he was aware of the reserve of unfunded debt, and had some idea of an Imperial loan, whence he expected the production of the loan would create a fall in the stocks from one and a half to two per cent. which certainly would have been the case, if his Majesty's message had not arrived at the time it did, and of which he had then no apprehension. This was the reason why he yielded to give the contractors a higher bonus upon the loan of December; and this made the difference between that loan of eighteen millions, and the present one of eleven and a half. If he had known beforehand that the stocks had shown a tendency to rise, he should certainly have made the premium less. He acted solely on his judgment for the best; and whether he judged rightly, he submitted to the candour of the House, as he only rose to state the grounds on which his judgment was formed.

Mr. Francis said the transaction of the last loan had been sufficiently discussed, and he was sure that by this time it was pretty well understood, at least by the public. He should therefore only offer a single observation on something that had just fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right honourable gentleman had asserted that, from a variety of circumstances then existing, he did expect that there would be a considerable fall of the stocks from one to two *per cent.* upon the production of the last loan in December; and that, for that reason, he had yielded to give the contractors a higher *bonus* on that loan. Mr. Francis observed, that supposing the right honourable gentleman to have felt that apprehension, and not to have had the message at that time at all in his contemplation, he had certainly taken a very effectual course to prevent its effect, viz. by the message. He then stated a fact, on which he wished for information and explanation; two acts of parliament have been passed in this session, to enable government to issue 3,500,000*l.* exchequer bills, to replace the same amount held by the Bank. It is now found necessary to relieve the Bank from this load, and money is raised by the present loan to pay off the 3,500,000*l.* exchequer bills, which the Bank hold. This then makes the issue of that sum in exchequer bills, according to the former two acts of parliament unnecessary for that purpose. The acts however remain in force, and having been passed this session, cannot be repealed. The minister then may still issue this sum in exchequer bills, if his necessities should increase, for services which were not in our contemplation, and over which we can have no previous control; at least he had the power; and admitting that in fact he had no intention to use it, still there ought to be a parliamentary restraint over the possible exercise of such a power.

Mr. Francis then mentioned a fact which he said he had learned since he came into the House, and on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or some of the gentlemen near him, might be better informed. The right honourable gentleman had the preceding night stated it, among the advantages of the present loan, that by funding or providing for three millions and a half of exchequer bills, the market would be greatly relieved, and the credit of that sort of paper raised in proportion; he was nevertheless assured from unquestionable authority; that exchequer bills issued or offered for sale that every day, were bought at the enormous discount of five *per cent.* notwithstanding the operation to which he had before al-

luded

luded, and from which so great an advantage had been promised and expected. Was this a fact, or was it not?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said in reply, that there would be a difficulty in point of form to repeal the acts of the legislature passed in the present session; if any jealousy however, which he admitted to be perfectly constitutional and just, were entertained that the executive government would abuse the power unintentionally given by these bills, he conceived the properest way would be to select some mode by which the evil might be guarded against, and the mode that appeared to him to be most parliamentary, was either by an address to his majesty, by inserting a clause in the present Loan bill, or by moving a resolution to a similar effect. As to the other circumstance, he suspected the honourable gentleman was not accurate in his expression, or at least not accurate in his information; he knew of no exchequer bills that had been issued that day, and he would venture to say none had been issued. If any exchequer bills had been brought that day into the market, and discounted at the rate the right honourable gentleman had stated, they must have been bills previously issued. In regard to the operation which he had ventured to predict from the relief of the market by providing for three million and a half of exchequer bills, he had to observe that the resolution to that effect did not become an act of the House, till it was reported; after which he indulged himself in the hope that his prediction would be fulfilled.

Mr. Francis said a few words in explanation.

Mr. Grey thought it wrong to let the acts for enabling government to issue exchequer bills and replace the same after the relief afforded to the Bank, remain in force without some provisional restraint; and he hoped that, some way or other, either, as the right honourable gentleman had stated, by an address to his Majesty, a clause in the present Loan Bill, or by moving a resolution, that restraint would be provided. In respect to the other transaction, it surprised him, after 3,500,000*l.* of exchequer bills had been taken out of the Bank, that exchequer bills should be brought to market at such a discount. These Bills, he observed, were issued to the office of Ordnance as part of a payment of the arrears which were due there, in the same manner as to every other office under government, and afterwards negotiated by that office; and one of them had been purchased by a friend of his at a discount of five *per cent.* This matter he thought worth the attention of the House; and he should certainly include it in the proposition of inculpation of his Majesty's ministers which he

meant to bring forward so soon as he could procure the papers he had moved for, since, if they had not violated the letter, they had violated the spirit of the law, by using that money for arrears which was voted for prospective services.

The other resolutions of the committee were then read, and the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, Mr. *Rose*, and Mr. *Hobart*, ordered to prepare and bring in Bills upon the same.

FRENCH EMIGRANTS.

Mr. *Martin* stated that large sums were owing to the French emigrants, the withholding of which reduced them to great distress. It was the duty of the House to interfere, and unless this business were adjusted, he would make a motion to cause the arrears to be paid up.

SLAVE-CARRYING BILL.

Mr. *H. Thornton* gave notice that an honourable friend of his who was at present prevented from attending by illness, intended to introduce some further limitations into the Slave-carrying Bill, when that Bill came to be reported. The limitations he proposed were to increase the tonnage of ships, and not to allow the traders to employ more ships, or import more slaves, in any vessel, than they do at present.

The *Speaker* informed him, that if the regulations were to be enforced by pecuniary penalties, they must be introduced in the committee; if not, they might be introduced on his report.

SCARCITY OF CORN.

Mr. *Lechmere* lamented the constant thinness of the House, when he wished to move for remedying the causes of our present scarcity. He moved, that the Corn Committee, which stood as the order of the day, be discharged, and fixed for Tuesday next. Ordered.

LONGITUDE BY SEA.

Sir Philip Stephens moved for an account of the monies issued by the Treasurer of his Majesty's Navy, pursuant to an Act passed in the 13th year of his present Majesty for the encouragement of navigation and naval experiments, and for finding out the longitude at sea, to be laid upon the table.—Ordered.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

WEDNESDAY, *April 20.*

The Judges attended the House, and counsel was heard in the cause of the corporation of London and the corporation of Lynn, relative to port duties.

CHRISTIE'S DIVORCE BILL.

Mr. *Pigott* attended at the bar on behalf of Captain *Christie*, who he stated to have been at the close of the last war a captain in the 88th regiment. Captain *Christie* was married in Edinburgh, to Miss Elizabeth Baird, daughter of Sir William Baird in 1781. He was after that suddenly called upon to join his regiment, and did so, leaving Mrs. *Christie* behind in England. Shortly after his departure she became acquainted with a young man of the name of Baker, who was going out to India. The consequence of that connexion was a criminal intercourse between them. When Captain *Christie* returned home, he brought an action against Mr. Baker; by mistake it was served upon a gentleman of the same christian and surname, so that when he appeared in court, the plaintiff was non-suited. The embarrassment arising to Captain *Christie* in money matters from this circumstance was such, that after bringing a new action against the right person, and obtaining a judgment of 400*l.* he was obliged to sell his commission, and he had lived in retirement abroad until the late war gave him an opportunity of mending his affairs, by entering again into military service. Mr. *Pigott* thought proper to state these circumstances to their lordships, to account for the delay which had taken place, and he trusted they would be deemed sufficient.

The several previous proceedings were then established, and evidence called, to prove that Mr. Baker and Mrs. *Christie* had lain all night together, in the year 1783, that she had since lived in a state of prostitution, and had a family in the West Indies.

The Bill was read a second time.

Read a second time several other Bills on the table.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *April 20.*

Warwick and Braunston canal Bills were read a third time, and passed.

Mr.

Mr. Rose moved for an account of the produce of the permanent taxes, for the year ending the 1st of April, 1796. And for an account of the three years produce, ending August, 1795.

Leave was given to bring in a Bill for the better levying a duty on hats,

PEWTER POT BILL.

On the motion for the second reading of the Bill for preventing the purloining of pewter pots, &c.

Mr. Dent objected to the second reading of the Bill. He said the Bill manifestly pressed on private individuals; and the pewterers' company authorized him to state, that if they did not suppose that the House would have refused it in the first instance, they would certainly have petitioned against its passing into a law. There need be no act, he contended to oblige publicans to refuse lending out their pots, as they had such power without the interference of the legislature. If the Bill past, it would materially affect the revenues of the city of London, as the city derived a considerable emolument from the stamps on pewter measures. It would besides considerably affect the property of his royal highness the Prince of Wales, in the Duchy of Cornwall, by rendering his mines there less productive, as pewter-pots were composed of three component parts which included tin, regulus, and lead. Instead of the loss of one hundred thousand pounds *per annum* accruing to the publicans in consequence of the purloining of pewter pots, he could state, from the best authority, that the whole number of pewter-pots made for the use of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and for exportation to America, was not more than forty thousand. He conceived that the publicans could be effectually relieved without the passing this Bill, by making it penal, for any pewterer, or old-iron shop to purchase pewter melted down into a mass. If the Bill should be passed into a law, he stated, that not less than seven thousand persons, who are now employed in carrying out porter to private houses would be turned loose on society. He must again remark that poor people, not having utensils at home to receive the porter, would be obliged to go and spend probably their week's wages at the public-house, which he thought a very serious consideration. He said further, that if pewter pots were not cleaned with a particular sort of liquid, the porter would not carry a head, without which it was scarcely worth drinking. He insisted that the more pewter pots were stolen, the more the pewterers gained; and he was

con-

convinced, if the Bill passed, that the consumption of porter would be diminished, and the revenue of course suffer.

Mr. *Buxton* said, that some of the reasons urged by the honourable gentleman against the bill, had considerable weight; with respect however to the injury which such an act would occasion to the prince of Wales, it was entitled to little regard with the house. Whether his royal highness suffered or not, if the bill was calculated to prevent a crime which led to the punishment and disgrace of the criminal, it signified not. If, as had been stated on a former night, that seven crimes out of ten tried, were caused by the stealing of pewter-pots, he was opinion that the incitement to the theft should be immediately removed; for that reason he would certainly vote for the bill.

Mr. *Dent* in explanation, accounted in some measure for the number of convictions for pot-stealing by stating that the publicans had entered into subscriptions to bring those chargeable with the offence to conviction and punishment.

Mr. *Francis* said, he had been obliged to listen to both parties without doors interested in this measure, which so confused his mind that he was for some time much at a loss to know how to determine. He was of opinion that the house should first establish the fact, and then draw the natural inferences arising from it. The honourable gentleman had said the Prince of Wales would be a sufferer if this bill passed, that however was little to the purpose; neither had that part of his speech any weight which stated, that the interests of the city of London would be materially affected. He should have argued as to the justice of the bill, and when that was once established, the other considerations were very subordinate indeed to the main question. The parties differed widely with respect to the sum said annually to be lost by the purloining of pewter pots, it was nevertheless needless to enquire who was precisely right; that numbers to a large amount were stolen was admitted on all sides, and therefore he was persuaded the incitement to the crime should be removed. He could not see with what pretension to justice the pewterers should put in their claim against the bill; if they suffered in proportion as theft was diminished, he was of opinion, that that so far from being an argument against, it was the strongest that could be urged in favour of the bill. He was aware that no agreement among the publicans, would remove the evil, for there would be ever adventurers, who tempted by profit, would embark in the business, and who would certainly not be bound to an agreement to which they did not subscribe. If the thing was right,
it

it should be done by law; and he was of opinion, that there was scarcely a poor man who could afford to buy porter, who could not provide himself with a vessel. The honourable member who opposed the bill, said, it was an act of fines and penalties, but this he did not make out. The bill did nothing more than put an end to the fraud, by removing the temptation, and for those reasons, he would give his assent to the motion of his right honourable friend.

General Smith was of opinion, that the Prince of Wales, so far from objecting, would be well pleased, even if his revenue from tin suffered some diminution, provided that good was done to the morals of the community; but with regard to the present Bill, he was of opinion that it ought not to pass into a law; he saw no necessity to require it; he considered any thing like compulsion or interference in matters of trade or commerce to be improper; and in the present case, the House was called on to frame a compulsive law in a matter wherein those who are to be benefited may avail themselves by their own deed, without applying to Parliament. He owned that when he first heard that 100,000*l.* was annually lost for the article of pewter pots stolen, he was alarmed; but he had since learned that the whole amount of such pots annually made in London did not exceed 25,000*l.*

Mr. Fox said the more he considered this Bill, the more he was convinced of its utility. If it was not true that so large a sum as 100,000*l.* was lost in pots, it was certain that a very great loss was sustained, and the impression of this fact was not to be done away by the assertion of any gentlemen, however respectable. That it was not meant to draw the poorer classes to the public-house was evident from this, that the application was from the more opulent kind of publicans, who would not probably be very fond of such kind of customers. Neither were the pewterers to be considered as averse to the measure since they had not in a legal manner applied to the House; besides, had they any right to a profit which accrued from theft and robbery? He had no objection, and the publicans had none, to a clause to compel them to carry out the porter; and other particular objections might be removed in the committee. If this Bill imposed a restraint, it was only on persons desiring it. The evil complained of was of a serious nature. No less than three hundred persons in the county of Middlesex had been convicted, in the three last years, for this slight offence; and therefore, whether the moral evil itself were considered, or the consequences it produced, gentlemen were called on to enact a remedy, and the Bill, he took it

was the best that could be had. The great view of the bill was to prevent crimes by removing the facility and the temptation, to guard the morals of the people by preventing them from committing little crimes that but too frequently led to greater; and thus keeping many persons in the innocent class of society who would otherwise be added to the profligate and the guilty. No private agreement could be effectual; because, the smaller publicans might be induced to depart from the agreement with a view of courting employment. Upon the whole, he thought the bill such as ought to go into a committee.

Sir William Young opposed the second reading of the bill, for the sake of preserving morals and laws. It would, he said, abridge the comforts of the lower orders, and bring them into the habit of frequenting ale-houses. Instead of having their beer at a certain hour carried to them, poor persons would be obliged to send their wives and daughters to the publicans; and thus the minds of females would be corrupted, by the vices afloat in such houses.

The Secretary at War followed *Sir William Young* in opposing the principle of the bill. He agreed with *Mr. Fox*, that prevention of crimes was the best mode of police: that argument, however, he conceived, told against the bill. Besides, poor persons could not have their beer so good after its transfusion into the vessel of the publican as when drawn in the vessel they drank it out of.

Mr. Lechmere said, the pots of publicans were usually filthy and nasty; hence this bill would conduce to health and cleanliness. He combated the arguments that had been used against the bill.

Mr. Fox said in explanation, that a clause might be introduced in the committee to compel publicans to send their porter to the residence of their customers.

Mr. Courtenay recommended it to gentlemen to read the bill. He had heard one gentleman (*Sir William Young*) say, that the virtue of females would be corrupted by its passing; and another (*Mr. Windham*), that the virtue of porter would be destroyed by it; as if porter was an ethereal fluid, and lost its virtues by transfusion. If the gentlemen read the bill, they would find such objections done away by the provisions.

The house then divided on the second reading;

Ayes	-	-	-	15
Noes	-	-	-	27

Adjourned.
Vol. IV. 1796.

Y

Majority, 12
HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, April 21.

Heard counsel in the writ of error in the case of the city of London, and the corporation of Lynn.

The order of the day for the third reading of the personal succession tax bill being read,

The Earl of Lauderdale said, that having on a former occasion considered the nature and the provisions of this bill, a good deal in detail, he did not intend at present to detain the house long. He had thrown out a variety of objections with a view to draw their attention to a measure which he believed would be of the most serious consequence. He held himself entitled to take this bill into consideration in conjunction with another that was to be brought forward, by which he conceived their lordships would be particularly affected. It was a matter of calculation that in a given period the whole property of the country would pass through the coffers of the public, and it was for their lordships to consider whether the exigencies of the state were such as to justify a minister in seizing upon the capital of the country as these bills would do. If they were regardless of the effect they would ultimately have upon their fortunes and upon their dignity, they ought to endeavour to ward off the evil with which the merchant was threatened. The best writers upon the subject of political œconomy had reprobated the principle of taxing the capital of a country. It took away from the mass of capital which supported industry. It diminished the quantity of reproductive wealth, and by narrowing the fund that maintained the riches from which the revenue was derived, it threatened to shake the foundation of public credit itself. He would not go at length into the various objections he had formerly urged, but would content himself with entering his protest against the measure; which, however, he would delay doing till the other bill was brought forward. The reverend prelate had been offended with his saying that the minister by this measure was seizing upon property, and sparing that of the church. He confessed that he saw no reason while the capital of property both personal and real was taxed, that an equivalent should not be levied upon that of the church in passing from hand to hand in the way of presentation, translation, or other modes of preferment. Considering the bill as he did, as a most dangerous attack upon the capitalists of the country, he must give it his firmest opposition.

The Bishop of Rochester said that he did not at all consider
the

the present bill as seizing upon any property, as the noble Earl had expressed it, nor did he consider the operation of it to be so fatal as was represented. He had been at the pains to make some calculations upon the subject, and he believed he was as much versed in such matters as the noble Earl. It was not so easy to find an average of the number of collateral descents in a given time, as the average of the lineal descents. Considering, however, that property would descend in collateral succession 11 times in 220 years, which he believed he might take as the average, it would be 220 years before the sum of 100*l.* would be annihilated by the payment of the tax in the utmost proportion of six per cent. although it were to be wrapt up in a napkin, and never placed in the way of accumulation or reproduction. The original sum would only pay the tax; the remainder, after paying the first, being reduced to 94*l.* would pay proportionately, and thus the calculation was a decreasing series, with regard to the property. It was not to be imagined, that capital would lie unemployed, as the noble Earl had stated in the example. It would either go to people that would live upon it, and then the sum would be placed out of the possibility of paying any more tax, or would be employed in some way of industry, where it would regain what went away in the tax and accumulate farther. With regard to the property of the church, it was already taxed, and in no degree resembled the transmissions of property falling under this bill.

Lord Grenville said, that as the noble Earl had not gone into the detail of the measure, he would rest satisfied with what he had said on a former night, and with what had been urged by a reverend prelate that day. When the other bill came forward he would be ready to enter into calculations to shew that it would have no such effect as was predicted by the noble Earl. The data upon which he proceeded were extravagant and extreme, nor would it happen that property would be transmitted in such a manner as to produce that consequence as was represented, of throwing all the wealth of the county into the coffers of the public.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, that the noble lord had only alluded to those of his arguments which had been directed against the bill that was expected, and had not attempted to obviate those he had pressed against that immediately before the house. The principles on which he had reprobated the other bill were not so large as the noble Lord imagined; he could produce instances, and had pointed out some, in which the effect he predicted would have taken place. The principles

ples of calculation on which the reverend prelate had gone, seemed to be advanced by him with more regard to the authority of them than their own justness, as he could not conceive upon what data they were founded. The principles upon which this species of tax had been treated, were very different from those of the reverend prelate. It had existed in Holland; to what proportion he did not recollect, but the calculations formed with regard to it bore no resemblance to those he had heard.

The bill was then read a third time and passed.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, April 21.

Meadow's Estate, Butter, and Ufford inclosure Bills, were read a third time, and passed.

STAMPS.

The *Lord Mayor* presented a petition from a gentleman of the name of Manning, captain of a ship, which stated that he was possessed of a bill of exchange, of the value of 2000*l.* but that being drawn on a larger stamp than the law required, he was advised by counsel he could not enforce payment of it in a court of law, because it was not on a proper stamp, praying therefore for the aid of the House to authorise the commissioners to stamp the bill with the proper stamp, on payment of the duty, &c.

The petition being read,

Mr. *Sheridan* observed, that it was scarcely conceivable the legislature should mean, when they passed the stamp act, in this case, that any instrument should be void because it was on a larger stamp than was requisite. He had no objection to the House relieving this gentleman in whatever way was necessary, but he should hope there was no necessity for it, and that the bill stamped as it was, could be supported in a court of law.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* did not think that a court of justice would refuse to receive in evidence a bill because it was not upon an appropriate stamp, provided it was not under the value of what the stamp ought to be. It could hardly be deemed the intention of the legislature to say, that an instrument shall be void because the duty paid to government was higher than was required by law.

The *Speaker* observed, that the better way would be not to refer

refer this petition to a committee, but to let it lie on the table; if it should appear that there was no necessity for parliamentary interference, nothing farther need be done to it.

Mr. *Sheridan* remarked, that this was a matter of very great importance to the public. If redress could be obtained for this gentleman, he should be the last man to think of withholding it; but it really ought to be quite clear that a court of law would not receive this bill before the House proceeded upon the case, because, by proceeding as if this was an invalid bill, they would admit in substance that all those instruments which were drawn on stamps larger than the law required were as illegal as if upon stamps lower than the law requires; a thing which would be extremely injurious to a great number of persons, having understood that many deeds were drawn on stamps that were higher than was necessary, under an idea that they were all legal. It would be a very serious thing to disturb all such deeds: and therefore the House should take care how they sanctioned the principle.

After a few words from the *Lord Mayor* and the *Speaker*, the petition was laid on the table.

QUAKERS.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* presented a petition on behalf of the Quakers. He paid a very handsome compliment to them for their unoffending temper and exemplary morals. The petition stated, that they were under certain and very great inconveniences with regard to the mode of treating them with respect to tythes, in consequence of their religious scruples, which they could not with integrity disavow, and religious scruples of all kinds, while they did not offend the law, nor affect the rights of others, ought to be regarded, and always by a liberal mind would be regarded with tenderness and respect. This petition was presented for that purpose. It stated the hardships to which the petitioners were exposed. It stated, by way of instance, the case of seven of their suffering brethren in the castle of York, where they have been long confined, but with that respect to parliament, which entitled them to attention, they abstained from the presumption of pointing out any remedy; they left that to the wisdom of the House. He should be content for the present in having the petition left upon the table. The nature of the relief he would explain on Monday next. He should not propose on behalf of the Quakers, any thing that infringed on the right of others. He should also bring forward, on that day, another point which was not hinted at by the Quakers, but the necessity of which

he

he felt by experience. Great inconvenience had arisen, and the administration of justice was often defeated, on account of the distinction which the legislature had made in taking the affirmation of Quakers in civil cases alone, and rejecting it in criminal cases. He had mentioned this to many of the learned judges, and he had the good fortune to concur with them in opinion, as to the necessity of doing away that distinction, and and of taking the affirmation of the Quakers, in criminal as well as in civil cases.

The petition being read, was ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* then gave formal notice, that on Monday next he would move for leave to bring in a bill for the further relief of the Quakers in respect their religious scruples, and also to make their affirmation receivable in criminal causes.

Mr. *Dent* brought up the report of the committee appointed to enquire into the loss of the fees of the clerks of the public offices, which will be occasioned by the bill now depending in the house for regulating the mode of sending by post the printed votes of parliament and printed newspapers.

The report being read, it appeared by the evidence of many of these gentlemen, that their losses will be very considerable indeed, if the bill should pass into a law without indemnity to them.

Mr. *Sheridan* reminded the house of the justice of making an adequate provision to these gentlemen.

After a few words from Mr. *Canning*, General *Smith*, and Mr. *S. Bernard*, the report was ordered to be submitted to a committee on Tuesday next.

Sir *William Dolben* moved that the order of the day for the house going into a committee of the whole house on the slave carrying bill should be deferred to Tuesday next.—Ordered.

General *Smith* gave notice that he should on Monday next move, that the proceedings of the court martial on Mr. *Cawthorne* should be taken into consideration, and then appoint a day for Mr. *Cawthorne* to attend in his place in that house.

TAX ON HATS.

The bill for the better regulating the duty on hats was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time tomorrow.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he had no doubt this bill contained many ingenious devices for the enforcing payment of this duty; when any burthen however was to be laid on the public,

lic, he wished to attend to the provisions of a bill. He should therefore move, that this bill be printed, that the house might have an opportunity of seeing what sort of a thing it was.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he was ready to agree to the proposition, for a reason directly contrary to that of the honourable gentleman, who had talked of it as a new burden on the public, which it was not; because it was a matter of regulation of a duty, which parliament had long ago agreed to impose. He therefore did not agree to the printing, because the bill imposed, but because it regulated a duty. He should, however, be very glad of the assistance of the honourable gentleman, in the discussion of the subject, if he would give himself the trouble to attend, but he could hardly hope he would.

Mr. Sheridan said, the right honourable gentleman need not despair of his attendance. He had often assisted the minister, and often corrected his blunders in his tax bills, although he must confess he had experienced but little gratitude from him for such assistance. The minister now said this bill was a regulation. He hoped it would be a better one than his former bill upon the subject. Formerly he refused printing the bill, and he blundered in it, else there would have been no necessity for the present bill. Now he came forward, and said, consistently enough, "I have no objection to record my own blunder, and to print the remedy."

The bill was ordered to be printed.

A message from the lords informed the house, their lordships had agreed to the bill for regulating the mode of trying contested elections, without any amendment, and to several private bills.

BARRACKS.

Mr. Grey moved, that the papers on the table from the office of the paymaster of the forces be printed. Ordered.

EAST INDIA PAPERS.

Mr. Secretary Dundas moved for various papers belonging to the East India company preparatory to his opening his India budget. He said, he was happy to say, that the affairs of the East India company were such as to afford conveniently that relief which they merited, to the brave and excellent officers who served in India, the whole of which he should explain hereafter.

All the accounts he moved for were ordered, brought in immediately, and ordered to be printed.

General Smith moved that there be laid before the house an account of all the sums of money that have been paid by the
East

East India company to government on account of the 500,000*l.* they engaged to pay annually, together with an account of the balance that now remained due to government upon that subject. Ordered.

NAVY DEBT.

Mr. Grey moved for an account of the navy debt from December 1796, to March 1796.

For an account of the several sums granted for temporary barracks from June 1792, to December 1795.

SUCCESSION TAX BILL TO REAL ESTATES.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer brought up a bill for granting a duty on the succession of real estates in certain cases, which was read a first time.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he should propose to follow in this bill the mode which the house adopted in the other with regard to personal property; viz. to read the bill a second time *pro forma*, go into committee, fill up the blanks for the purpose of making the nature of the bill more intelligible, and then appoint a day for its discussion after it had been re-committed and printed. Ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

WAR IN THE WEST INDIES.

Mr. Sheridan moved that the adjourned debate, on the papers for which he moved on a former night, respecting the war in the West Indies, be now resumed.

The Speaker said, that a motion being made on a former night, that there be laid before the house copies of the contracts made in the year 1794 and 1795, for the shipping taken up from the East India company, to be employed in conveying troops to the West Indies, and a debate having arising thereon, the question he had to put was, "that the debate be now resumed?" which was agreed to.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer asked, if it would be deemed out of order, for those gentlemen who spoke on a former evening, to rise again if they thought it necessary?

The Speaker said, that in point of strict order no member had a right to speak twice upon one question, in an adjourned debate, any more than in another debate, but he thought it his duty to state to the house that there was a precedent, in a recent instance, by which the rules of order had been dispensed with, as well as on former occasions.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer reminded the house that when papers were moved for, which embraced in their objects the

the whole and every part of a system, that they should be granted with great caution. Having on a former occasion urged arguments and stated reasons to convince the house, that such general inconvenience could not now be obviated, he did not think it necessary to say more, than that he would negative the motion.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, the right honourable gentleman assumed a fact which he could not admit, viz. that he had used arguments and offered reasons in his former speech, to shew why the papers for which he had moved should be refused. On a review of that speech, it did not appear to him that the right honourable gentleman had offered any thing in the shape of either reasons or arguments to induce the house to agree to the motion. When the subject was before the house, he proposed that the discussion should be adjourned, in order that the subject might be debated, and now it was brought forward, he declared, that he would not consent to granting the information that was desired. This was the whole of the argument of the right honourable gentleman. He had before understood that the minister wanted some time to prepare himself for this matter. He had that time granted, the debate having been at his instance adjourned; he had however, made very bad use of his time, as he had now nothing to say, except that he was not in a humour to give the house any information on the subject. This was part of the minister's plan. There had, of late, been some endeavours made which had been hitherto much too successful, to introduce into that house a novel and bad practice, by which the minister had superseded the inquisitorial power of that house; it was to refuse to the house all preliminary information, when on the face of the matter there was ground for inquiry into his conduct, and when perhaps the result of that inquiry would be his own complete disgrace. This practice was entirely unknown to former parliaments; and contrary to the common established practice of the house of commons, it would, however, be a very convenient thing to the minister, if he could establish this novel practice; for it was calculated to conceal his blunders, and to prevent the house from recording his incapacity. He called on the house to have recourse to their journals, when they would find that previous information was never refused preparatory to a general inquiry. During the administration of Lord North, he never presumed to use such language, or to shelter himself behind a majority to prevent discussion. The house then agreed to go into a committee. Previous information was granted; and according as the case was made out, parliament

subsequently voted on the subject proposed for investigation. If in the first instance the case was not made out, he would cheerfully agree to the fact, that parliament was not warranted in granting an inquiry; but it should be cautious how it suffered itself to be seduced from exercising one of its most valuable rights, by the mere assertion of those who are interested, that official documents ought not to be granted.

This war was said to be different from any other in which this country had ever been engaged. Certainly the manner of conducting it would lead gentlemen to think so, and the manner in which information was refused in this war was widely different also. It was a fact, that out of the numerous inquiries moved for, a British House of Commons had never thought fit to institute one, and what was the consequence? Ministers claimed confidence in proportion as they were convicted of incapacity. The new doctrine of these gentlemen was as curious in itself, as it was derogatory to the established usage of parliament; they say, they will withhold the papers on which an inquiry should be instituted, but a discussion may still take place. This was a new phrase, and merited the particular attention of the House; to what a situation, in such case, was he reduced? Ministers say, you may have an inquiry, but what sort of an inquiry? One founded on facts, collected from rumour, which the right honourable gentleman met with in his official documents. The right honourable gentleman last year regretted that the lateness of the session prevented him from entering into a discussion of the merits of the war in the West Indies; declaring that there was nothing he desired so much, since he was persuaded it would redound to the honour of his Majesty's servants; if, therefore, it should be moved this session, he should be glad to assent to it. How stood the matter now? The motion is made, and the minister opposes it. Was there one man in that House, he desired to know, who would stand up and say, that there was no reason to apprehend there was any blame whatever imputable to those who have had the conduct of the war, or in the expedition to the West Indies? Would any man say so, when he recollected what had happened after that brave, gallant, and admirable officer, Sir Charles Grey left the West Indies? After his brilliant conquests there? He believed there was no man, even among the minister's friends, hardy enough to make that assertion. How had Sir Charles Grey been treated by the king's ministers? From the hour he left England to the hour he returned in 1794, not one reinforcement had been sent to him to the Leeward Islands. He

He believed not a single man. Of this he did not speak with absolute certainty, but he believed not one man. If he was mistaken upon this subject, it was in the minister's power, and it was the minister's duty, to refute him. If in consequence of this negligence of ministers, we had lost the greatest part of the conquests of Sir Charles Grey; if in the delay of equipments in 1794, men had been kept in floating pest-houses until they perished by disease; if by a culpable, scandalous, murderous negligence of ministers all this had happened, and he was ready to prove it had, was that, or was it not, fit matter for the enquiry of that House? Most assuredly it was; but how were these things to be inquired into before the proper documents were on the table of the House?

With respect to the great expedition sent out under the command of Admiral Christian, much blame was also imputable of ministers, which he would take on himself to prove, if the new doctrine was not established of the propriety of granting discussion without inquiry. The right honourable Secretary at War, on a former night, declared he would give his voice against the production of the Count de Sombreuil's letter, because he was of opinion that it was called for merely to implicate the conduct of the right honourable gentleman. If this doctrine was admitted, there was an end to all inquiry. The paper, however, had been produced; the honourable gentleman when it was first called for, affirmed, that it was of a private nature, on its perusal, was there an individual who was not convinced that it was altogether of a public nature? On that occasion, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a manly manner, stepped forward to support his friend, and share the glory of the Quiberon expedition, than which a more weak and inglorious expedition never stained the annals of the British history. The unfortunate Count, it appeared by that letter, had left the kingdom totally unacquainted with its objects, or the person by whom he was to be commanded. He had no idea of being under the control of an incapable man, Monsieur de Puissaye. Englishmen were entrapped, cramped, and kidnapped, and Frenchmen liberated from the prisons of this country to go on that infamous expedition. If the House would agree to the inquiry, he pledged himself, and every pretension he had to credit, that he would clearly make out his case to the satisfaction of gentlemen, and prove by respectable evidence at the Bar, that the failures, the losses, and disgraces in the several expeditions, were owing to the misconduct of ministers, who

deserved to be publicly impeached for their inefficient plans and horrid abuses.

If any commander lost a ship, he called for a court-martial and solicited an inquiry; but ministers disregarded their character in following so wholesome an example. After Sir John Jervis had left the West Indies, he had letters to assure him that many officers behaved in a manner that called for an inquiry into their conduct. Why did not ministers institute an inquiry? Because they apprehended that an enquiry would be productive of recrimination. There were at present many officers in town, who, if the House would agree to a committee, would appear at the bar, and support him in every assertion that he had advanced. Ministers were not so tender of others as they were of themselves with regard to enquiries. A brave officer, Admiral Cornwallis, who had spent his life in the service of his country, was lately tried by a court martial, for not shifting his flag and going to the West Indies, in pursuance of orders from the Admiralty; and the sentence of that court was truly curious and extraordinary—that he was right and wrong; that blame was imputable to him, but no censure merited. This he stated to shew how ready ministers were to accuse others, and consequently that they resisted enquiry into their own conduct with an ill grace. Perhaps if the House went into the inquiry, a similar judgment might be passed on ministers with that passed on Admiral Cornwallis; they at least ought to satisfy the House and the public with an investigation, to ascertain where the blame lay: whether at their own door, or whether it was to be attributed to the officers they employed.

Mr. Sheridan next adverted to the conduct of ministers, with respect to Sir Charles Grey: the glorious achievements of that brave and distinguished officer, he said, were all lost by the misconduct and supineness of ministers; their not sending out sufficient re-inforcements was of the most fatal consequence to the army, who yielded to the hardship of the duty which was imposed, and many of whom expired with fatigue. Was not therefore extreme blame imputable to them, for not sending out a necessary supply to maintain what he had so brilliantly and rapidly achieved? The next motion he would therefore make was for “a return of the men lost by fatigue and disease in the West Indies at that period.”

This return he moved for in order to convince the House, that ministers, by the drain of men from the three kingdoms, must materially injure their population, and reduce them to

an alarming state of imbecility. The hardships which the men were obliged to undergo, in consequence of the delay in sending out re-inforcements during the time Sir Charles Grey was in the West Indies; reduced them to a situation unprecedented, they were literally without shoes and stockings, and with their feet bleeding were obliged to encounter the burning sands. What excuse he asked, could ministers offer for not supplying those defects?

The next motion that he should have the honour to submit was, "That an account be laid before the House of the number of men withdrawn from the forces intended for the West Indies, for the purpose of being sent on the expedition to Quiberon." Also a motion, the object of which was to have laid before the House "The application to and correspondence of the officers commanding in the West Indies with his Majesty's ministers, relative to the re-inforcements which they demanded for the West India Islands," also, "An account of the several re-inforcements which had arrived in the West Indies" Also, "An account of the number of men sent to St. Domingo and what sent for," and "An account of the number of men and the number of staff employed under Lord Moira in the years 1794 and 1795."

The object of the last motion was to inquire why this formidable armament was not sent out to the relief of the islands, and to give ministers an opportunity of justifying themselves on that memorable occasion. He was convinced if they acceded to this motion, that he could make it out to the satisfaction of the country, after receiving such information, that on the face of this expedition, nothing could be more shameful nor more detestable. Did not the House conceive that some explanation was necessary on the several expeditions planned against the coast of France? Was the numerous staff employed under lord Moira, a circumstance that required no explanation? Why was the staff, and that large armament kept idle and unemployed, which was the theme of so much ridicule and contempt throughout the country, but, which, however, never could attach on the gallant nobleman, who then commanded it, but must rest on the ministers by whom it was planned? So far from any blame being imputable to the noble earl, the noble earl, he understood, would have no objection to appear at the bar of the House, in order to shew that the disgrace, inseparable from that expedition, was to be attributed alone to the weak and imbecile conduct of his Majesty's ministers.

The

The next motion he would make, was, "That there be laid before the House an account of the number of men and officers lost since the return of Sir Charles Grey from the West Indies, specifying the loss of each particular regiment." Also, "An account of all the stores, including the hospital stores, and the number of ships employed." These would lead to the discussion why the troops in the West Indies were so cruelly and shamefully neglected, at a time when so many gaudy, expensive, and inactive camps were displayed throughout the country. Nothing, he asserted, but a miracle, saved the West Indies at that period, there salvation was, in fact, totally owing to the sickness and diseases that were spread amongst the troops of the enemy.

He next adverted to the wretched state of the British army in the West Indies: the 29th regiment, he was well assured lost four hundred men; and in June, the hospitals in Martinico were crowded with British officers and British soldiers, who were in want not only of medicine, but even bandages to dress their wounds received in gallantly fighting against the enemy. He adverted to a fact, which he affirmed was well known to several of the officers, that ninety or one hundred men, who had been put into a transport to be brought home, in consequence of some dispute about freighting, had been re-landed on the beach, covered with wounds, and many without limbs, where for a night they were left to the mercy of the elements to prolong a miserable existence, and only seven or eight survived. When there were such strong grounds for the enquiry, how, he asked, could the House resist it? The desperate situation of affairs in the West Indies, without men, without provisions, or any force in the island, originated that chagrin, which, in all probability was the cause of General Vaughan's death.

He next moved, "For an account of the number of men who died in the ports of Plymouth, Southampton, and Portsmouth." Also, "For a copy of a letter sent from the Mayor of Portsmouth, Colonel Lenox, and other officers." These were for the purpose of informing the House, that day after day many of the troops in those places expired through fatigue. Many dead bodies were thrown overboard, and others were carried indecently through the streets without coffins. When he on a former night stated the shocking neglect of ministers in leaving men stowed in ships for seven or eight months a prey to disease and death, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had held his information cheap, and even presumed to deny the fact; he had, however, several letters from
officers

officers on board the fleet complaining of the fast, who, if the House would grant a committee, he had no doubt would appear at the bar, and prove the authenticity of his information. He declared, that the Mayor of Plymouth in particular had made frequent remonstrances to government on this affecting business, and that no attention was paid to his letters. He suggested the propriety of relanding of the men, rather than suffer them to proceed to their destination, when they were rendered entirely incapable of service, a suggestion which government at length though it expedient to adopt.

He next adverted to the fleet under the command of Admiral Christian; asserting, that ministers were highly culpable in that instance, as he could not admit it as a justification for the delay of the fleet, whether or not the transport board and board of ordnance, suffered some idle *etiquette* to injure the public service, by creating delay with respect to the departure of the expedition: he could state on the best authority, that the melancholy disasters which occurred to that fleet, were not to be attributed to mere adverse winds, but to negligence in not sending it out in small detachments, which would have arrived in time to reinforce the army, and yield the necessary succour to the islands. His next motion was "For the production of Extracts of letters from General Abercrombie, and Admiral Christian, with an account of transport board, and the number of ships foundered or missing."

Mr. Sheridan observed, that he would move merely for one paper more; and that was a copy of his Majesty's proclamation, dated the 10th of December, 1794, transmitted to Gen. Sir Adam Williamson. In this a new light was thrown on the with-holding reinforcements from the West Indies; for the proclamation stated, that his Majesty disdained using force. In this, his Majesty expressed his feelings for the distresses of the people; and wished not that he should be considered as conqueror, but emancipator, at the moment it pleased him to establish martial law in the island. The whole Mr. Sheridan observed, was an affectation of the gasconade style of France; (*a laugh*) Mr. Sheridan said, he meant old France; for the French at this day laid aside that bombastic tone. Mr. Sheridan proceeded to read the proclamation:

"ST. DOMINGO.

Mole, Saint Nicholas, December 10-

"BY THE KING,

"We, William Parker, Esq. Rear-Admiral of the Red, and Gordon Forbes, Esq. Major-General and Commander in Chief of his Britannic Majesty's forces by land and sea.

His

" His Britannic Majesty, feeling for the distresses of the colony of St. Domingo, has received favourably the submission of a great number of the inhabitants of every quarter, and granted them his protection.

" It was to be believed that all who had been instructed by the excess and the universality of calamities, would have hastened to unite themselves under his tutelary authority.

" Thus his Majesty did not think it proper at first to display that appearance of power which would have announced the conqueror rather than the emancipator. He sent only a small force, which was sufficient to secure the general police, if the effervescence of opinion had been calm, but insufficient for reducing by force the great body of the mistaken inhabitants.

" The beneficent views of his Majesty have been partly frustrated, when he concentrated his forces in some particular districts to which he has restored their tranquillity, their worship, and their opulence.

" He has abandoned, for a moment, and with regret, the remainder of the colony to the ravages of anarchy.

" But his Majesty owes it to the glory of his arms to complete by force the work which he undertook from generosity. He owes it to public morals to annihilate a system destructive to all the social bonds which unite the colonists among themselves, and which unite the whole to our sovereign.

" He owes it to his personal sensibility to hold forth a succouring hand to a multitude of worthy men, who groan in every part of the island, and invoke his protection. He owes to his clemency the pardoning of errors. In fine, he owes to his justice the punishment of those who persist in refusing the paternal and regular government which is offered them, and who, after having made acts of submission, break their oaths by committing acts of rebellion.

" His Majesty, by a continuation of naval victories, has so reduced the marine of the French Republic, that it is absolutely impossible for the government of that country to send any aid to its partizans in St. Domingo. He has even forced the Convention itself to proclaim, by an express decree, its impotency in that respect.

" His Majesty has, therefore, determined to send to St. Domingo such a body of forces, that all resistance shall henceforth be impossible.

" In confiding to us the command of his forces by sea and land, his Majesty has commanded us to fulfil exactly the views by which he is himself directed.

" We bring then to all the inhabitants of St. Domingo, and to each individual, peace or war, prosperity or destruction.

" We promise, in the name of the king, that those who submit willingly, shall find, under the protection of his Majesty, the pardon of their errors, individual safety, and the preservation of their property.

" Those who, after a voluntary submission, wish to leave the island, shall be at liberty to embark for the American continent, or for France, upon taking an oath not to bear arms against his Majesty during the war.

" We

"We declare, in the name of the king, that those who shall resist his arms, shall experience all the rigour of the laws of war, and that whoever violates an oath of fidelity, shall be punished with death as a rebel."

"Given in the House of the King at Mole, St. Nicholas,
Dec. 10, 1795.

(Signed)

"PARKER and FORBES."

On this proclamation Mr. Sheridan made a variety of observations, and proceeded to state, that if the papers for which he moved were produced, he would prove to the House a most solemn and serious charge of misconduct and mismanagement on the part of ministers. If they feel bold on the occasion, they should feel grateful on the opportunity he gave them of vindicating their characters, and exculpating themselves from those charges with which they stand arraigned.

The last topic on which he had any intention to trouble the House upon this occasion, was with respect to the continuance of the war. Upon that subject, he must observe, there was nothing before the House to justify them in saying there was at this time any prospect of peace. He hoped and trusted that some opportunity would arise in which they should have an answer from the minister what the prospect of negotiation was. That they should all know in a regular manner the result of the negotiation that had been begun, for silence upon such a subject was extremely dangerous. The impression this had made already out of doors was considerable; and, although some persons might think that we are at war now, on account of the arrogant claims and unreasonable pretences of the French, he was convinced the general impression was that we are at war, not on account of the arrogant claims, intolerable pride, or unreasonable pretences of the French, but because the minister of this country has not made a sincere attempt to negotiate. Such was his opinion; and he thought it fair to speak his own conviction upon that subject. Whether the continuance of the war, however, be imputable to French or to English counsel, nothing would insure future success so much as an inquiry. Assuming, therefore, for the sake of argument, what he never would admit, that the French were the aggressors; assuming, what he knew to be false, that the war on our part was just and necessary, and even unavoidable; assuming all these things, merely for argument, he would still say there was every reason for that House to enter into the inquiry which his motions were intended to prepare; and therefore he trusted he should not be opposed upon that subject. He concluded with moving his first resolution.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said, that as many of the observations of the honourable gentleman, had not the most remote connexion with the subject then before the house, he should not attempt to follow him through them. He could not however avoid remarking the very singular predicament in which the honourable gentleman had placed his majesty's ministers, by calling upon them to produce a variety of papers, many of which, whatever their private feelings might be, they could not, consistently with their public duty, agree to lay before the public; and then charging them with a wish to check all discussion, because they did not produce them—the honourable gentleman had alluded, but not quite correctly, to something that passed in the house towards the close of the last session. He had stated that he (Mr. Dundas) had upon that occasion regretted that the lateness of the session prevented the house from going into an inquiry into the conduct of the war in the West Indies, but that he had pledged himself to an inquiry in the present session. He remembered perfectly well, that during the last session, when speaking of the forces which had been sent to the West Indies, he stated that 20,000 men had been sent there; he was contradicted in that assertion, and he did certainly express some regret that he could not then with propriety prove the correctness of this assertion; he had however by no means pledged himself to a general inquiry. He knew that he should expose himself to the sneers of the honourable gentleman in the declaration he was going to make; he nevertheless would, in the most solemn manner, protest, that there was no one circumstance which he desired so anxiously as a full enquiry into every part of the conduct of the war in the West Indies; and begged to assure the house and the honourable gentleman, that a day should come when that business, with his majesty's permission, should be thoroughly investigated, when it could be done consistently with the public safety. Having said thus much, he should feel no hesitation in opposing the inquiry at present proposed by the honourable gentleman, because it was impossible that such information could be given, as would enable the house to form a competent judgment upon the subject, without at the same time, laying before the world information, which it would be highly improper to make public; or else they must go into the inquiry, without grounds to proceed upon. It was therefore the duty of his majesty's ministers, and a very painful one it was, to lay a restraint upon their inclinations, which would certainly lead them most strongly to the enquiry. It appeared to him, that it would have been full as consistent with candour, if the honourable

nourable gentleman had previously shewn his motions to ministers ; but he had not thought proper to do so, but came down with a string of, he believed, one and twenty motions, for different species of information, upon the propriety or impropriety of granting which, administration were called upon immediately to decide. The honourable gentleman had, upon a former day, certainly handed over, what he called, a sketch of his intended motions ; but it could not give the least information, as to purport, of the long string of motions which he had now brought forward. He was going to make an observation, which perhaps it would be more adviseable in him to desist from, because possibly it would encourage the honourable gentleman to adopt the same conduct in future ; but he really must confess he was very much puzzled at those motions : To some of them he saw no objection, but to others there was the strongest. He could not however sit down without remarking on the singular line of conduct which the honourable gentleman had adopted. His motion chiefly related to circumstances which happened two years ago. At the end of the session, he said that he (Mr. Dundas) closed with him for an inquiry. On the first day of the present session, he talked in a lofty style upon the gross mismanagement of the war in the West Indies ; and considering the magnitude of the expedition, which was fitted out in October, and the preparations which have been since made for other armaments, together with the manner in which he then talked, one would have thought that he would have brought forward his motion at the very commencement of the session ; instead of which, he gave notice of it for the 12th of April, when it could be of no benefit to the country ; and not till then finding himself in want of information, he began to think of moving for papers on which to proceed. The honourable gentleman seemed angry that he had spoken to his right honourable friend (Mr. Pitt), but certainly it was a mark of respect to him, because they were consulting upon the propriety of agreeing to some of his motions : if, however, the honourable gentleman felt himself so much interested upon the subject, it was rather singular that his anxiety had permitted him to defer the motion so long. If he intended this as a remedial and preventive motion, as he said he did, it was rather astonishing that he kept it back till it could neither operate as a remedy, nor as a preventive. In one assertion of the honourable gentleman he begged leave to remind him, that he was not correct ; namely, that no reinforcement whatever had arrived in the West Indies, from the time of Sir Charles Grey's arrival to his departure. Such

was not the case: four regiments under General White had arrived in that interval from Cork; and notwithstanding all that had been said concerning the defenceless state of the islands, it was obvious that Sir Charles Grey himself did not think that they were in that condition; because he dispatched the whole of these four regiments down to St. Domingo: At first, indeed, only three of them were sent: but the other soon followed. From that conduct he had a right to infer, that in that officer's opinion the islands were not in a defenceless state when he left them in June, 1794, a short while after he had so dispatched the regiments. If, however, the honourable gentleman wished to proceed with candour in the business, he would not press the subject at that moment, but give his majesty's ministers time to consider all the motions; they would, upon a future day, state to the house which they would assent to, and which they could not; with their reasons. Under the idea that the honourable gentleman would assent to that proposition, he should not take up more of the time of the house at present.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, that he considered the proposition of the right honourable gentleman for a short delay, in order to consider what papers he should grant and what he would deny, to be perfectly fair. In answer to what the right honourable gentleman had said, of his not having brought on the subject sooner, he was ready to state the reason why he had so long delayed bringing the subject forward. At the commencement of the session, when he was said to have menaced ministers on this point, he expected that an inquiry into the whole conduct of the war would have been instituted. At that time an immense armament under the command of admiral Christian was preparing for the West Indies, and had he then made his motion, it would have been said "Do you wish to disclose to the enemy the state of the islands, do you wish to make known their wants at the very moment when means are taking to afford them the requisite supply? Do you want to stir up rebellion in the colonies?" The campaign was by this time over, and the season for action past, it could not therefore be urged that any danger could arise from disclosure. Although the whole speech of the right honourable gentleman went to accuse him with delay, and want of candour, in bringing forward his motions the right honourable gentleman had not attempted to shew that any communications which he demanded, could, in the smallest degree affect the public safety, for which he was so anxious. He hoped that when he had considered the motions, he would be prepared, precisely, to state

state in what respect they could be productive of danger. The right honourable gentleman had contested his assertion with respect to Sir Charles Grey. It now, however, appeared from his own admission, that Sir Charles Grey had not the use of one single man. What was the argument of the right honourable gentleman? That Sir Charles Grey did not want reinforcements, else he would not have sent three regiments to St. Domingo, and afterwards dispatched a fourth to the same quarter. Except Sir Charles Grey had dispatched this force from the instructions of ministers, or in the confidence of larger reinforcements being sent out for the security of the islands, the right honourable gentleman attached to him a heavy responsibility. If he had been so miserably mistaken with respect to the security of the islands, if he had acted on his own authority and judgment, then undoubtedly he, and not ministers, were responsible. If, however, having the solemn assurance, and being in the daily expectation of the arrival of a larger force, he took upon himself to dispatch those four regiments, then ministers were accountable for not having sent out that force, which was essential to the security of the islands? On this subject he should feel it necessary to bring forward a short additional motion, viz. "That Sir Charles Grey be directed to attend at the bar of this house."

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said, he would never sit silent and suffer words to be put into his mouth, which he had not uttered. He desired the honourable gentleman to recollect, that he did not say that Sir Charles Grey might not expect other reinforcements, or that he thought the West Indies would be safe without them after he came away. He merely confined his statement to the fact, and the inference naturally arising from it at the time.

Mr. *Fox* asked, whether the right honourable gentleman did not mean his argument to be understood in this way? "You talk of want of reinforcements, while Sir Charles Grey felt so secure on the subject, that he thought himself at liberty to dispatch to St. Domingo, four regiments which had been sent out?" The question then was, when Sir Charles Grey dispatched those regiments, was he in expectation of additional reinforcements? If he thought the West Indies safe, because he expected reinforcements, then it became a just ground of inquiry why these reinforcements had not arrived, and whether they had been kept back from unavoidable accidents, or from the negligence of ministers. He professed himself ignorant of the fact; but he hoped that the real state of the case would come out. He had always thought an inquiry necessary; and he now considered it to be indispensable for the character of Sir Charles Grey.

Mr.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* again contended, that language was attributed to him, which he did not use. He did not say that Sir Charles Grey did not expect reinforcements to be sent out, or that the islands would have been perfectly safe, if no reinforcements had been sent out; he merely said, Sir Charles was not apprehensive of their safety on the first of June, 1794; and, as a proof he had mentioned that Sir Charles sent three regiments to St. Domingo, which he would not have done, had he apprehended danger; and, as commander in chief, he had a discretionary power.

Mr. *Fox* still contended, that the way in which the expression was used, tended to throw the responsibility upon Sir Charles Grey, by attributing to him such an opinion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* thought that an unfair advantage was taken of the assertion of his right honourable friend. It never could be imputed to him, that he meant to flinch from responsibility; those who knew his character could not for a moment suppose it, nor could they imagine that he meant to deliver an opinion for Sir Charles Grey, that could possibly attach censure to him. No man had been more ready to pay him the tribute of esteem and gratitude, which was due to him from that House and from his country. He had built his own glory on the triumphs of his country, and his right honourable friend was always warm in his praise. But when an honourable gentleman shortly expressed an argument, into which he afterwards meant to enter more fully, it was not to be expected that he should guard it with every minute qualification. His right honourable friend had stated, as two strong arguments, that on the 1st of June, Sir Charles Grey felt no immediate uneasiness with respect to the security of the islands, that he had dispatched those four regiments to St. Domingo, and that he had set out on his return to this country. If during the length of time which afterwards intervened, before any reinforcement arrived, some danger had intervened, which he in the first instance could not foresee, that was a point afterwards to be argued, and it would remain to be enquired into, whether that interval was imputable to the omission or negligence of ministers, or to any other cause for which they were not responsible.

Mr. *Francis* said, that he would put the question upon a short issue. Was Sir Charles Grey perfectly satisfied of the security of the islands, from the circumstance of being in possession of a force fully sufficient for their defence, or from the expectation of the arrival of a greater reinforcement?

General Tarleton conceived that it would be found on inquiry,

quiry, that Sir Charles Grey, in sending General White's reinforcement to St. Domingo, had not followed his own discretion, but obeyed a positive order from government.

Mr. *Sheridan* said he understood that Sir Charles Grey was always of opinion that the force which he had was insufficient for the security of the islands. Sir Charles Grey never did, never could make a declaration that those islands could be retained without an additional force. Was not the inference then which the right honourable gentleman obviously meant to draw from his statement, that Sir Charles Grey, on leaving the islands, was perfectly satisfied with respect to their security, and the adequacy of the force left to protect them. Was it likely that Sir Charles Grey, would have acted as he did, except in the conviction that a larger force was to be sent out for their protection? He must persist therefore in his motion for the attendance of Sir Charles Grey, and the only question he would ask him was, "Whether, upon sending away the regiments and leaving the islands, he thought them in a state of security, except on the supposition of the arrival of additional reinforcements."

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that as this motion, he supposed, was to come on with the others, he should not take up the time of the House in arguing it at present. But he was sure there was no man who entertained a more exalted opinion of Sir Charles Grey than his right honourable friend, who would be as anxious to defend that gallant officer, as any of those who appeared to be his warmest friends. He was also sure, that no man who knew his right honourable friend, would ever accuse him of wishing to shift responsibility from his own shoulders upon those of any officer whatever. As to what Sir Charles Grey's opinion was, it appeared to him past all doubt; because he might undoubtedly, as Commander in Chief, have retained those troops which he sent to St. Domingo: what put the matter out of all doubt however was, that Sir Charles himself left the West Indies. How could it be supposed, that an officer, than whom one more gallant and brave never was employed upon any service, would have quitted his post if he conceived there was any danger to be apprehended? Most undoubtedly not. So far, therefore, from conveying any thing like an imputation upon that officer, the truth of his right honourable friend's assertion rested upon the high idea he entertained of his (Sir Charles Grey's) gallantry. The honourable gentleman had said, that he was not sure whether he should move for an inquiry, until he had seen the papers for which he moved. The impropriety, therefore,

fore, of going into a committee to examine a general officer, relative to a great expedition intrusted to his command, must be apparent to the House.

Mr. Fox admitted that the attendance of Sir Charles Grey could not be required till the question of inquiry was decided; but he contended that the mode in which the name of this gallant commander had been brought forward, furnished of itself a cogent ground for an inquiry, and such as the House ought not to resist. Sir Charles Grey might think himself at liberty to quit the islands, in the assurance that a reinforcement was coming out, and that an officer was appointed by his Majesty to assume the command. That was no reason why an inference should be drawn, that he was perfectly satisfied with respect to the security of the islands, if that reinforcement did not arrive. What had been attempted that night, furnished an illustration of the modern doctrine of discussion without inquiry. In answer to facts and arguments, ministers brought forward partial and mutilated statements, and then refused to produce the documents, by which the real state of the case could be ascertained. In the present instance, they attempted to shelter themselves under the opinion of a respectable commander, refusing at the same time to bring forward the papers which were necessary, in order to shew on what grounds and principles that opinion was founded. Had not the present explanation taken place, they would have had the advantage of their unfounded inference, and the misrepresentation of the opinion of Sir Charles would have gone abroad to the country. He wished the papers to be brought forward, and to be made the subject of inquiry. The decision would then rest, not on his opinion, or on that of Sir Charles Grey; it would be determined not by hypothesis, but by facts and by evidence; in that way only the real merits of the case could be ascertained.

The question was then put and carried, that the debate should be adjourned to Thursday the twenty-eight instant.

Mr. Grey, who had been absent during the conversation, and who entered as the Speaker was putting the question to adjourn, said that he must beg to detain the House for a few moments. Many allusions he understood had been just made to a character in whom he was highly interested. When on a former occasion he declared that he would not interfere in the subject of debate, it was because the relation to whom he alluded had enjoined him not to state any thing which he might have collected from his information, or which might seem to stand upon his authority. With this injunction he was de-

sirous

sirous to comply. At the same time he must state, that the most earnest wish of that person was to have the fullest inquiry instituted into every transaction in which he was concerned, so far as was consistent with the public interest. He must therefore beg, that no inference should be drawn from any supposed opinion of that person, unless papers were produced which explained the grounds and principles upon which that opinion was founded. Thus much he found it necessary to state, in justice to a character whom he had every reason to respect and love. He therefore hoped that if any opinion of that person had been brought forward, and any inference attempted to be founded upon it, that no evidence should be refused which was necessary to elucidate the subject, and that all the circumstances of the case would undergo the fullest and most minute investigation. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, *April 22.*

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* concluded his reply to the writ of error in the case of the city of London and the corporation of Lynn, after which the Lord Chancellor proposed a question of law to be put to the learned judges, to which the lords agreed, and the question was ordered to be put accordingly.

Received several Bills from the Commons, which were read a first time. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, *April 22.*

Leave was given to bring in a Bill to allow the retail of fish in Billingsgate market.

Leacroft's estate, Tattershall inclosure, and Bolton road Bills, were read a third time, and passed.

ADDITIONAL TAX ON WINE.

On the motion for the commitment of the Bill for imposing an additional duty on wine,

Mr. *Rose* moved, that it be an instruction to the committee, to make a provision for prohibiting auctioneers from selling any wines, except it shall be proved to the commissioners of excise that all duties whatever, have been paid on the same.

General Smith thought this provision very severe, and instanced the case of a person to whom a large quantity of wine should be bequeathed by will, and who might wish to dispose

of it; in that case, it would be extremely hard to apply the tax, and when applied, very sore on the individual.

Mr. *Rose* said, that without some such provision, the tax would lose its effect.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, if it was meant that it was necessary to prove that the wine had paid the new duty, it was very hard, that any part of a private individual's stock, which he might have had before the tax, should be compelled to pay it. He thought the tendency of such a provision highly objectionable, and wished, instead of it, to extend the tax to private gentlemen as well as to wine-dealers; if a regulation could be adopted to prevent excise officers from access to gentlemen's houses. It was certainly severe on the public, who could not lay in a stock of wine, to pay three shillings and sixpence a bottle, when gentlemen, who had a stock by them for three or four years, could drink it for about two shillings a bottle.

After a few words from Mr. *Rose*, the House divided—

<i>Ayes</i>	38
<i>Noes</i>	20
	—
<i>Majority</i>	18

The House then resolved itself into a committee, and after some time the chairman was directed to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

The House being resumed, the chairman of the committee reported and moved accordingly.

Resolved, That this House will, on Monday morning next, resolve itself into a committee to consider further of the said bill.

Mr. *Grey* said, the principal papers, which he had moved for in contemplation of a motion of which he had given notice generally being at present on the table, he rose to give notice that he intended to submit certain resolutions on Tuesday the eighteenth of May, respecting the gross misapplication of the public money, and flagrant violation of the law, which he thought he should be able clearly to make out by the papers which had been furnished to the House, after his repeated calls to ministers for them. If he succeeded in carrying the resolutions, he said he intended to follow them up with a motion for impeaching ministers.

DOG TAX.

Mr. *Dent* said, that on account of the absence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would postpone the committee on the dog tax till Monday the twenty-fifth instant, wishing it to be

be understood that he could not give up the idea of reserving the proceeds for the poor's rates, and making no difference between assessed and unassessed houses.

Mr. *Sheridan* did not see how this Bill required particularly the attendance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, unless some particular regulation was intended with regard to the dog with the words "the right honourable William Pitt," on his collar, which had been detected in the act of worrying sheep, or to give him a special licence to live at the public expence. Possibly it was the honourable gentleman's intention to bring in a clause to prevent any creature of the right honourable gentleman from preying on the public; to such a clause he could have no objection. Mr. *Sheridan* said, he had read the Bill, and fairly owned he did not think a single clause of it could stand, he would, therefore, advise the framers of it to withdraw it and prepare a new one; at least he would recommend it to the Secretary of the Treasury to have one ready.

GENERAL INCLOSURE.

Sir John Sinclair brought up the report of the select committee, to whom the Bill for facilitating the division and inclosure of waste lands and commons, by agreement among the parties interested therein, or a certain proportion thereof, and for removing certain legal disabilities, that might otherwise stand in the way of such agreement, was committed. He said, that from the difficulty of making arrangements and removing legal disabilities, it was necessary to make a complete alteration in the Bill: yet as all were agreed on the general principle, he saw no reason to stop its progress in its first stages; he therefore would wish to refer the report to a committee of the whole House, if convenient, next week.

Mr. *Curwen* said, that he wished for some time for the public, to consider the Bill, and the consequences it was likely to produce. It was, he thought, highly improper to push it forward precipitately.

Mr. *Duncombe* declared, that it appeared to him to be more advisable to let it lie over for the present session; by which time the sense of parliament would be better ascertained respecting what provisions it might be proper to adopt.

Mr. *Huffey* said, his opinion was, that the country would find themselves disappointed in the expectations they had formed of the Bill. It was therefore matter of indifference to him whether it lay over for the present, or were totally relinquished; because it did not go to the root of the evil, and

could do little or nothing towards bettering the circumstances of the poor of this country. If parliament wished to take any effectual step, any salutary measure in this way, they ought, *in limine*, to bring in a Bill for dividing and inclosing the whole of the King's forests and the crown lands. While we were giving bounties for grain from foreign markets, there was land enough in these forests and wastes, which lay idle and dormant, if reclaimed, to supply abundantly the wants of the whole of the people. If these were first inclosed, then the whole of the waste lands might in time be, in the same manner, improved. Till that were done, in was in vain to be urging measures of a partial nature and not at all likely to prove effectual.

Mr. *Lechmere* said, he agreed with the honourable gentleman who spoke last, that the King's forests ought to be reclaimed for the use of the country, he was, however, nevertheless of opinion, that much good would be affected by the general inclosure proposed; and for that reason he would give the Bill his decided support.

Captain *Berkeley* said, as the Bill affected the whole landed interest of the country, more time ought to be given. Though much remained to be done, still the report ought to be referred to the consideration of gentlemen, because this would be paving the way to future improvements.

Lord *Sheffield* thought, that whether the Bill were to pass in the present session or not, still it was desirable that it should be re-committed: for, even supposing it did not pass now, it would be better to have the Bill printed, and go into the country for general inspection.

Mr. *Powys* said, if it was intended that the Bill should pass in the present session, a delay at this period of it might prove inconvenient, because many gentlemen materially interested might be prevented from attending.

Sir *John Sinclair* said, he certainly wished the Bill might pass this present session. He spoke of the utility of general inclosures; and observed, that the report being considered, could in no degree preclude the good effects which, he was aware, would be owing to such a measure. He then moved, "That the Bill be printed, and that the report be referred to a committee of the House on Wednesday the fourth of May;" which was ordered accordingly. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, April 25.

Went through the Bills upon the table.

Earl Moira's Debtor and Creditor Bill was put off.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, April 25.

Mr. *Elliott* brought in a Bill for preventing unlawful combinations among workmen in the paper manufactories, and for the better regulation of their wages, which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second.

Powell's estate, Fawke's estate, Grimsbury harbour, Eveston drainage, and Hampton Poyle inclosure Bills, were read a third time and passed.

Mr. *Alderman Anderson* moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the relief of coal-heavers on the Thames, between London-bridge and Greenwich, and to prevent frauds in their employment. Leave was granted, and Mr. Alderman Anderson, Mr. Alderman Lushington, the Lord-Mayor and City members desired to prepare and bring it in.

Mr. *Mainwaring* brought up the report of the committee, with the amendments on the Bill to prevent frauds in the sale of hay and straw, when the Bill was ordered to be printed, and the report taken into further consideration next Thursday.

A message from the Lords announced the passing of several private Bills, and desired the concurrence of the House to a Bill for divorcing James Christie, Esq. from Elizabeth Lessie his wife, and to enable him to marry again.

JOURNALS OF THE HOUSE.

The Speaker said, that he had received a letter from the person appointed to make an index to the eleven last volumes of the Journals of the House, informing him that the work was completed, he therefore thought proper to suggest to the House the propriety of appointing a Committee to examine the index, and report their opinion upon it. A motion to that effect was accordingly made and agreed to.

WINE DUTY BILL.

Mr. *Rose* said, there was an irregularity in this Bill, which would perhaps render it necessary to withdraw it, and to introduce a new Bill; a clause respecting auctioneers selling wine had

had been by mistake inserted in the Bill, without the consent of the House; it certainly was his intention to have moved for leave to introduce such a clause, and after he had obtained leave, it would have been regular to have put it in the Bill, but it was inserted before he had gone through the necessary form; he should therefore move for leave to withdraw it.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he did not rise to object to the motion, he was in hopes, however, that the honourable gentleman would have found other defects to ground his motion on. He had already stated, that he thought it very improper that the stock of persons selling wine should have been taken before the Bill had passed into a law, and he was totally at a loss to know how the new duty could attach, or any penalty in case of selling it, upon the old duties only, could be laid before that law had really been decreed. A case he said, had happened that morning, where a person had sent out wine to his customer, burdened with the charge of the old duties only, and an excise officer had seized the wine. He wanted to know by what authority the excise officer had made that seizure.

Mr. *Rose* said, he believed the honourable gentleman had been misinformed upon the subject—the stock of the wine merchants had undoubtedly been taken, and a note left with them, stating, that such might become liable to a duty, hereafter to be imposed by parliament, of which he might, or might not avail himself in the mean time.

The Bill was then withdrawn, and a new Bill ordered to be brought in.

CITY COURT OF CONSCIENCE.

Mr. *Alderman Lushington* moved, that the Bill for the better recovery of small debts within the city of London, be read a third time.

Mr. *Jekyll* begged once more to call the attention of the House to this Bill, which appeared to him extremely objectionable in point of principle. The object of it was to enable the court of Requests in London to try and determine, in cases of debt up to five pounds instead of forty shillings, which was now the extent of its jurisdiction. He begged to observe, that this court was established by an authority not the most favourable to the trial by jury: It was established by council in the reign of Henry VIII. confirmed by an act of James I. and afterwards by an act of George II. about forty years ago. The House must perceive that the effect of this Bill would be to take away the trial by jury in a great variety of cases, and

in lieu thereof, to give a summary jurisdiction to these commissioners. One of the arguments in favour of this Bill was, the difference in the value of money now, and at the time the establishment was made; that argument however went to prove that this principle ought to be adopted generally all over the kingdom, and not only in the city of London, which certainly was the place the least of all others that required such a regulation, because it had two other courts, viz. the Mayor's court, and the Sheriff's court, who were competent to try causes of this description, and they had this advantage, that very able lawyers presided in them, and the trial was by jury, who were certainly full as competent to decide upon a question of debt as these commissioners. Many questions of law might arise in this court, upon which the commissioners could not be competent to decide, particularly upon the statute of limitations and the statute of distributions; their mode of proceeding also, by taking the oath of the party, was in opposition to the general principle of the English law.

He understood that a plan had been in agitation to give the sessions a power to try causes to the amount of ten pounds, but he did not know whether it was to be carried into execution; at all events however upon the grounds he had stated, he should oppose this Bill, the third reading of which he moved to be postponed for three months.

Mr. *Morris Robinson* spoke against the Bill, as tending to take away the trial by jury.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* lamented that gentlemen had not given this subject more consideration, and he confessed that he had not himself revolved it in his mind with sufficient attention. It would undoubtedly be a very desirable circumstance, if some plan could be devised for trying causes of this description, and at the same time retaining juries, and diminishing the delay and expence of the proceedings; the gentlemen, who proposed this Bill, he was persuaded would infinitely prefer a plan of that kind, if it could be effected. At this advanced stage of the sessions, he thought it would be better not to press forward a Bill of this nature.

Mr. *Alderman Lushington* agreed with the right honourable gentleman, but observed, that, although there were two other courts in the city for taking cognizance of small debts, yet the expence of suit in those courts was enormous, when compared with the sum contested, and the expence of obtaining a decision in the court of conscience. He had, however, no objection to postpone the Bill for the present.

The third reading of the Bill was then put off for three months.

COLONEL CAWTHORNE.

General Smith said, that he had read with great attention the proceedings of the court martial upon Colonel Cawthorne, and he was more than ever confirmed in the opinion he before entertained upon this subject. He had only therefore to move, "That the copy of the proceedings of the court martial be taken into consideration on Friday the twenty-ninth instant next, and that John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. be directed to attend in his place on that occasion."

Lord Tyrconnel said, he thought the House had not had sufficient time to consider the proceedings; and as the gentleman himself wished to state his defence to the House, he thought there could be no objection to substitute Monday the second of May, instead of Friday the twenty-ninth instant.

Mr. Dent said a few words to the same purpose; after which it was agreed that the House should take the proceedings of the court martial into consideration on Monday next, and it was ordered that John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. do attend in his place on that occasion.

DOG TAX.

The order of the day having been moved by *Mr. Dent*, and read, for the House to resolve itself into a committee on this Bill; and the question being put for the Speaker leaving the chair.

Mr. Sheridan said, he expected that a motion would have been made to withdraw the Bill, and on that account he formerly recommended his Majesty's ministers to have another ready, as he conceived it would be losing time to attempt to amend it. He had never seen a Bill so absurd and objectionable throughout before, and indeed he was not sorry that it was so; it appeared to him a just punishment for the pride and presumption of those persons who, because they retain a seat in that House, imagine themselves to be so many Chancellors of the Exchequer, and impatiently step forward to propose new taxes. Instead of being desirous to take the management of finance out of the minister's hands, he thought it would be better for them to leave it where it is; because by leaving ministers in the undisturbed possession of the duty of imposing taxes, they left them a responsibility for the heavy burdens they laid upon the people, to defray the enormous expences of those wars their indiscreet ambition entered into, and consequently all the odium both of the cause and effect of those burdens. Strictly speaking, however, any member had a right

to propose a tax on whatever subject he thought proper, but the question at present before them did not, by any happy exercise of that discretion, offer much encouragement for other gentlemen's imitation. He knew not whether the honourable mover of the Bill was stimulated upon Pythagorean principles, to pursue at present those resentments or antipathies which he might have conceived in some former state of existence against a race of animals so long distinguished as the friends and favourites of men; he would undertake however to shew that the present Bill was not admissible in any of its provisions.

In regard to the Bill itself, he never met one more extraordinarily worded; the folly of it extended even to the title; the title should have been a tax Bill, it was nevertheless entitled "A Bill for the better protection of the persons and property of his Majesty's subjects against the evil arising from the increase of dogs, by subjecting the keeping or having such dogs, to a duty." Hence, instead of supposing, as it generally had been supposed, that dogs were better than watchmen for the protection of property, people might be led to imagine, that dogs were guilty of half the burglaries usually committed, and that this was a new discovery.

In the preamble there was the same singular species of phraseology—it began with stating that "Whereas great and serious dangers, injuries and inconveniences,"—[He begged the House would admire the beauty of that climax]—"and more especially the calamities of canine madness, of late alarmingly increasing, frequently happen to the persons of his majesty's subjects, and to their cattle and other property." It certainly was by no means extraordinary that a man's cattle should be injured by the bite of a mad dog, but he could not conceive what was meant by other property, as he had never before heard that property could be affected with the hydrophobia. In *The Adventurer*, a periodical paper published by the ingenious Dr. Hawkesworth, he remembered, indeed, a sort of humorous account of a dog that bit a hog in the streets; the hog bit a farmer, and the farmer bit a cow; and, what was most extraordinary, each conveyed his peculiar quality to the other; the hog barked like a dog, the farmer grunted like a hog, and the cow did the best she could to talk like the farmer. He should have imagined that there must have been something like this disposition in inanimate things also, by the honourable gentleman's looking so very carefully after property; for, unless an instance had occurred of furniture's behaving in a disorderly manner, or a dumb waiter's barking

with the hydrophobia. he conceived such a phrase could not have been introduced.

[The house was in a loud and incessant roar of laughter, during the whole of this speech.]

The next part of the Bill he had to notice was a clause, the blank of which he hoped would never be filled; it solemnly stated, "for and in respect of every such dog, and for and in respect of every such bitch," a sum hereafter to be fixed was to be paid, and a register of such payments posted on the church door, where the parties reside. If the Bill therefore passed, they ought to pass another to enlarge all the church and chapel doors throughout the kingdom, for what with one tax and another, a register of the persons liable to the payment of which was to be affixed on church doors, no modern church or chapel door would be capable of containing a register of them all. He understood the *interior space* of those edifices was in general capacious enough for the reception of those who frequented them; but to contain such registers as were now proposed, would, he feared, be too much for the gates of any modern ecclesiastical structure.

The way in which the Bill proposes to enforce its provisions, he stigmatized as most unprincipled, cruel, and inhuman. He particularly adverted to the clause in which it was proposed "that no person or persons shall be liable to any suit, action or information, conviction, penalty, or punishment, for or on account of the killing, destroying, or converting to his, her, or their own use, any dog or dogs, bitch or bitches, for which the keeper or owner thereof shall not have paid a certain sum." If this clause were to remain, and any person did destroy or convert, as the phrase is, another person's dog, he would most probably assume that it was not paid for, or otherwise by what means could it commonly be proved?

So far the Bill was repugnant to the principles of humanity, since it was nothing less than a death-warrant to that valuable race of animals. He wanted to know also, what principle the Bill acted upon, that the same privilege should not be given for converting horses, since there was a certain species of dogs, such as pointers, setters, &c. that were scarcely less valuable. According to the same mode of reasoning, extend it to the Bill for enforcing the stamp duty upon hats, and you make sure of a general *scramble* for hats for which the wearers have not paid the duty; but apply it to the hair-powder licence, and the consequence must be, that every informer shall be authorised to convert to his own use the *head* of any man who ventures to wear powder, and has not paid the duty.

It was true that after any person had lost his dog in this manner, a clause was provided whereby he might bring an action, and maintain a right to recover damages from the converter; but how would it happen if the dog, still fond of his former attachments, should follow his old master? That master might, in such case, be whipped as a dog-stealer, though he should afterwards gain an action to prove the prosecutor the thief. The deprivation in this instance was not all; by the general slaughter which the tax would occasion, they were liable to convert into ferocity that mild and humane character which had hitherto been the pride and just boast of Englishmen. Were the national manners likely to be improved by a system which tended to familiarise and reconcile the eyes of the rising generation to the spectacle of seeing those animals slaughtered or hanging at their doors, which they had been accustomed to consider as their friends and play-fellows? The charge of ingratitude would also lay against them for such a decree of massacre against these useful animals, at the very time when they acknowledged them as *allies* of the combined powers and when their brethren formed a part of that *combined army* in Jamaica, which was fighting successfully against the Maroons, and supporting the cause of order, humanity, and religion.

He came at last to one qualifying clause, which was intended to enact, that puppies, when born, should not be liable to the penalty. He wished to know at what time they were to be made liable, and by what parish register they were to acquire the knowledge of the birth of puppies, for he thought there would be some difficulty in getting people to come forward and record the precise hour at which the bitch litters. A doctrine had been inculcated that dogs devour the sustenance of the poor; and therefore they were to be placed in the state of a besieged garrison, and feed upon the fare of dogs and cats. The bill in this instance tended to defeat its own object; could it be supposed that the poor, at this moment of dearth and scarcity, could afford to divide their scanty meals with such animals; and if they did, what was the conclusion, but that they would rather deprive themselves of some of the necessities of life, than lose their dumb, but faithful companions. Upon the score of humanity he had still another objection to offer. If the bill passed, there would be so many dogs knocked on the head, that it would tend to harden the minds of the common people to scenes and acts of cruelty and murder, and the mere sight of so many curs hanging at the doors of the lower orders of people, already too frequently complained of for their

brutality to speechless animals, might lead to far more fatal consequences. If the tax were levied only upon hounds and sporting dogs, he should oppose it, because it would tend to the diminution of the few pleasures which induce gentlemen to spend their fortunes on their own estates. Upon these grounds he wished the bill might not be persisted in.

The Secretary at War said, he did not mean to object to the whole of the Bill, but to part of it only. He thought a tax upon all sporting dogs fair, because they were a kind of luxury, and their owners could afford to pay. There appeared however a passion, spleen, and enmity against the canine race in the formation of the Bill, that amounted really to an extermination of the species. From the tenor of it he should have been apt to imagine that Actæon had revived, or that some fabulous divinities had descended to pronounce an eternal ban and curse on the whole race of dogs. They certainly at times were disagreeable, and he had felt that inconvenience, but he should have been loth to have avenged himself upon the whole species, in consequence of a little temporary inconvenience. It was unworthy this or any country, to levy a rate on any animal because that animal was not employed in tilling ground, or because the poor might feed on dog's flesh. The conclusion that naturally resulted from the general tenour of the Bill, and the arguments that had been urged in support of it, warranted the idea, that it was generally admitted, that there was not room enough on earth for men and dogs. The honourable gentleman had entered into a number of calculations, to shew the number of dogs, and the quantity of provisions they consumed, he seemed to have forgotten that there was a great body of waste which they destroyed, which, if they were annihilated, would become a greater nuisance. He seemed to imagine, that all the refuse now given to dogs, would go to human creatures. No such thing, dogs consumed a great quantity of offal, which could not well be otherwise disposed of, and consequently his calculation on the score of provisions consumed was exceedingly erroneous. He had also excited an alarm upon this head, by observing that population increases with provision. It undoubtedly did, but not if there be a greater quantity of provisions than the consumers require. How much of the produce of the earth goes to other purposes than the food of man? Does not the honourable gentleman himself give to his coach-horses and his saddle-horses, what would serve for human food? When the sustenance of men was considered, their comforts and well-being must also be considered; if they were not, society would revert to rudeness and barbarism.

With regard to that part of the bill which related to the dogs
of

of the poor, his objections were two numerous to repeat. Some dogs are retained by the poor as implements of trade, and the legislature ought not to tax the means of living, but the expenditure of the people. Some were retained for their companionable qualities, which did credit to both parties, and when the protection and winning attachment of a dog was remembered, it is unkind to propose any plan which should tend to destroy him. Dogs kept for sporting were peculiar to the rich, and though he did not mean to arraign sporting, he thought it not the highest sort of amusement, inasmuch as it reduced the hunter to the condition of the animal he hunted. With the rich it might be taxed, but with the poor the affection for a dog was so natural, that in poetry and painting it had been constantly recorded, and in any sort of domestic representation, we scarcely see a picture without it. If the rich man feels a partialty for a dog, what must a poor man do who has so few amusements? He would be destitute without one. It is the companion of his laborious hours, and when he is bereft of his wife and children, fills up the drear vacuity. It is a well-known fact that Alexander Selkirk, upon whose narrative the story of Robinson Crusoe was founded, sought the society of every animal upon the desert island, except those he was obliged to kill for food. That was his greatest satisfaction, and a dog affords a similar satisfaction to the poor. Would the house then sacrifice that honest, virtuous satisfaction? An honourable gentleman behind him (Mr. Buxton) disapproved of any difference between the poor and rich, because he wished for equality, forgetting that equal burdens are laid upon unequal powers, and that they ought to be proportioned in the same manner as rewards and punishments. But although he wished the tax to be levied upon sporting dogs, he was a friend to the game laws, and to aristocratical distinctions, and he thought all the arguments that had been urged against the game laws were recommendations in their favour, provided they were not pressing. He did not think that poor men kept dogs for the destruction of game, and he lived in a game country where he was qualified to judge; if a poacher even wanted a dog for that purpose he could afford to pay for it. As to the worrying of sheep, the dogs commonly kept by poor people were too small, for the dogs that worry sheep are pointers, hounds, lurchers, guard-dogs, &c. and whenever they are once guilty of that vice, they will never leave it off till they are destroyed, but dead or alive they haunt the animal, and have been known to tear the skins in tanners' yards. He felt in perfect conformity with his honourable friend, when he did not wish to leave any assessment on the poor; if people so

poor

poor and distressed as some were who kept dogs, would deprive themselves of part of their food to keep a dog, that was the best argument for the value of the animal, and he knew if they were assailed, how likely they would be to be taken up by the parish officers. An honourable friend (Mr. Buxton) had said that no person who receives relief from the parish, ought to be allowed to keep a dog. He differed from him in opinion, because the whole class of labourers are so liable to apply for relief, on account of the equal balance of their earnings and expenditure, that every accident or calamity subjects them to it. It would be cruel and impolitic to pass such a law, because it was a sort of law every man would revolt from. The dog is a companion to the solitary man, and to the man of family a playfellow for his children; these considerations induced him to wish that satisfaction to be preserved to the poor. The secretary at war said, he had been led on by the subject further than he intended, but he could not think of sacrificing any man's feelings to interest so peculiar to his own.

Mr. S. R. Penton said, he objected to the general principle of the bill. The most beggarly nation would not adopt a measure calculated to exterminate the whole of the canine species; even in Turkey where the dogs are considered as unclean beasts, they are treated with some degree of kindness. In some parts of Germany, dogs were taxed according to their size, a regulation which, if it was to take place in this kingdom, would subject him to a severe impost, as he once weighed one of his dogs against a nobleman in the other house, when the dog outweighed the peer by a pound. The hanging of dogs would familiarize the people to barbarity, and the circumstance of a park-keeper once killing a favourite spaniel belonging to him when he was a boy, and cutting the animal's head off afterwards with a hatchet, made such an impression on his mind, that neither had been, nor he was persuaded ever would be erased from his memory. Had he had the hatchet in his hand, and the park-keeper in his power at that time, he he could not now say what might not have been the consequence. How then could the house take upon itself to pronounce, that the poor man placed in a similar situation would not be actuated by similar feelings. As far as a tax on luxury, he had no objection to the bill; but the poor should certainly be exempted. On the whole the bill appeared to him to be so extremely exceptionable, that he recommended it to be withdrawn.

Mr. Buxton said, he did not rise for the purpose of following the honourable gentleman on the other side, or the right honourable the secretary at war, in the very ingenious speeches they

they had made; but as something had been said, insinuating that the supporters of the tax were actuated by an inhuman principle, he felt it incumbent on him to say for himself, that in the part he took in it, he was swayed by the most pure principles of humanity; on such he conceived a measure to be founded, which avowedly had for its object giving food and raiment to the poor, and preventing the waste and cost which they incurred from an idle, useless partiality. If a poor man kept a dog for poaching, to take that dog away was to serve him and his family, as it took away the very instrument and inducement to prodigality, idleness and loss of time. He believed he had as good means as any other gentleman of judging of the fact; and he could aver, that the really industrious poor seldom wished to keep a dog. Besides, as regarding the animal itself, the bill was fraught with humanity, the dogs kept by the poor being in general almost starved.

Mr. *Dent* said, he doubted not that those who had opposed the Bill so strenuously, would return to their constituents much the happier for the speeches they had delivered; for his own part he was satisfied that by the conduct he had followed, he had done his duty. It was said that every man set up to be his own Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it appeared to him, that every man set up to be his own buffoon. By the present Bill, no intention prevailed to turn it in any respect to the preservation of game. This was not its purpose. It was said that a dog was a harmless play-fellow to the children of the cottager, but he had received a letter to shew what kind of play-fellow it was. The letter stated that a person who had seven children, among whom his dog had been used to play, was bit by this dog, and four of his children, in consequence of which, they had all died of the hydrophobia. At Manchester thirty-three persons, within a twelvemonth, had been admitted into the infirmary, affected with this desperate malady, and at Southampton two or three hundred persons had been bit. Perhaps therefore it would be as much to the credit of gentlemen, if they served the cause of humanity seriously, before they indulged themselves in amusing the House with the flashes of their wit, and the pleasantries of their humour. It had been much insisted that no considerable quantity of provisions was consumed by dogs, but the fact was, a great deal of the food which might be useful to alleviate the wants of the poor was appropriated to their use. Sheep heads, and what was usually sold with them by the butcher, could not be obtained by the poor, they were all bought up for the use of dogs, though an article of that kind would serve a man and his family two days.

An honourable gentleman had gone as far as Turkey to shew the humanity of the inhabitants of that country, who sent straw into the streets, for the accommodation of dogs, but that honourable gentleman did not seem to know that there were in this country persons who employed *accoucheurs* to attend those animals, while they at the same time withheld from the poor that relief which humanity should induce them to bestow. He said, he could never agree to any distinction of the sums to be imposed upon the rich and the poor. Such inequality he considered the same in operation as a land tax, and he could view it in no other light. The object in the Bill, was regulation, not revenue, and to remedy the dreadful miseries arising from the frequency of hydrophobia. He wished that the Bill though passed, should not have force for six months, by this means not to occasion the immediate destruction of a number of dogs, but negatively to effect a diminution by discouraging the breed. He considered it as a false humanity which was affected by the idea of diminishing the comforts of the poor man in depriving him of his dog, while in reality this would enable him better to provide for his family. When it should be known that a cottager might keep a dog without being subject to a duty, there would not be a cottage in the kingdom without one. He was persuaded, and he had letters from every part of the country, especially from sheep counties, that confirmed him in his opinion, that though a tax of a guinea, or even five, were laid on the dog, it would soon be regained by the saving of sheep, immense numbers of which were now destroyed. The expence of a dog amounted at least to a penny a day, and upon his calculation of the whole number at a million, which was moderate, more money was consumed on dogs, than the whole produce of the poor rates. The same expence that a dog occasioned would be sufficient to maintain a child, and he was sure that it would be a very great saving to the poor, were they by any means relieved from this burden. The clause which he proposed should affect the poor who kept dogs, had nothing new in its principle. The principal inhabitants of many towns in the north of England, and also of the city of Bath, had entered into a resolution not to relieve the poor who kept dogs. It was consequently a false argument, that the Bill went in that view to take away the poor man's comfort; it, on the contrary, went to secure to him and his children the bread which was taken from them by those animals. It would also be found useful in a moral view, as the poor, by keeping dogs, were frequently tempted to become poachers, and when that happened, it was

impol-

impossible to foresee to what crimes they might at length be driven. It appeared to him, that there had been an anticipation of this tax by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; as in looking over the printed papers of the collectors of the last year, he had found, after the enumeration of other taxes, the dog tax also mentioned. He still was of opinion, that the produce of the tax should go to the poor rates, and he would take the sense of the House on that point.

Mr. Courtenay said, he was as yet an enemy to the Bill, although he had listened with all becoming attention to the very able and argumentative speech of the new Chancellor of the Exchequer. One statement of the honourable gentleman had indeed startled him as a little paradoxical, namely, that in which he calculated the expence of feeding dogs, as well those that eat nothing, as those that eat much, at one penny a day. This was so extraordinary, that without further explanation, he could not pay any attention to it. The honourable gentleman had fixed his *dentes canini* in all who opposed the Bill; and was so angry with them, that he reprobated every thing belonging to them; he had ever avowed that he hated wit, because they used it against his measure.

The honourable gentleman had stated, that every man was his own buffoon; if he wished to follow the example, he must prevail on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to send him into the other House, as he had stock enough to enable him to act by proxy. The honourable gentleman in his studies seemed to neglect that of ancient philosophy, he might profit by the example of the disciples of Pythagoras, who were enjoined to keep silence for at least seven years. He never heard such virulence used as the honourable gentleman had exercised against the unfortunate dogs. From his language he should suppose that he was seized with the hydrophobia; if so, his disrespect for wit would vanish, for the poet says,

"Great wit with madness sure is near allied,

"And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

If the honourable gentleman had been bit by a mad dog, it might have communicated that which was so nearly allied to madness; as it was, he had not the least chance of being troubled with that unlucky gift to which he seemed to bear such hatred. The reason, probably, why he had such an animosity to dogs, was that lord Chesterfield in a celebrated work, talking of the Dutch, said, they were good bankers; but as to wit, they could only get it by being bit by a mad dog; and a burgo-master in Amsterdam had actually got himself bit, by way of experiment.

periment. The book was extant, and, entitled "*Sailors Letters*." He would recommend it to the perusal of the honourable gentleman.

The honourable gentleman had stated to the house various letters he had received from farmers and graziers, deploring the loss of their sheep. He would have now to answer them with a similar lamentation on the loss of his bill. "Swain" said they, "we have lost our sheep." To which he might reply in the strain of the old ballad, "*Shepherds, I have lost my Bill.*"

He had asserted, that the food given to a dog would maintain a child. This was a sort of levelling principle, that if it had originated on the opposition side of the House, it would have been immediately denominated the language of jacobinism. He was surprised at the letters received against the unfortunate dogs, from the honourable gentleman's correspondents at Bath.

If as the honourable gentleman had said, the gentry of Bath had come to a resolution hostile to dogs, they acted with great ingratitude to that worthy animal; for it was not long since they could not have a dinner dressed without them, as they had not a jack in the city; when the dogs, therefore absented themselves, the confusion was unparalleled; the city was in an uproar; the aldermen were distracted, and the loss of poor turnspit was attended with horrors equal to those produced by an earthquake. When they had got jacks to turn their spits, it would be ingratitude to turn tail upon their poor old servants the dogs. Indeed it was an impeachment on the morals of that city, which ought not to be submitted to silently; and it would become the honourable member for Bath to stand up in his place, and censure so very foul a reflection.

He wished to furnish gentlemen with one of those causes which led so much to the slander of this valuable animal, and since which scarcely a patient was carried to an hospital without its being reported that he was bitten by a mad dog, a period, since which the house was scared with stories of the hundreds afflicted with the ravages of the hydrophobia, though the most eminent surgeons doubted of its ever being communicated by the bite of a dog, and the late *Jahn Hunter*, amongst others, was of opinion that the virus did not affect the system in one case out of a hundred. Mr. Courtenay next adverted to the conduct of Alexander, who the honourable gentlemen probably thought an object of imitation, who upon the death of his horse Bucephalus thought fit to put a whole Indian nation to the sword. The honourable gentleman had

asserted

asserted, that the poor man found no comfort in his dog; but before he could gain credit for the assertion, he must be transmigrated agreeable to the doctrines of Pythagoras, into his soul, to discover whether or not that were the case. Mr. Courtenay proceeded a short way in a Greek quotation apposite to his remarks, but said, he would relinquish that language, first, because he wished to be understood by the honourable gentleman, and the country gentlemen: and secondly, because that on a former occasion it was not well received from an honourable lord (Lord Belgrave) who addressed the House in Greek. The old Chancellor of the Exchequer was, he said, indebted to the honourable gentleman, and if he did not conceive that the "toe of the peasant came too near the heel of the courtier, so as to gall his kibe," he should not be astonished were he to appoint him governor of the Isle of Dogs. If the Bill were to pass, nothing could be more odious and improper, it would be a stain on the humanity of parliament, it would in its effects destroy every moral feeling, and render the hearts of the people callous.

In Strasburg a tax was imposed on those unfortunate animals, and what was the consequence? Whenever the hangman went about to strangle the dogs whose masters did not pay the tax, they were followed by crowds of boys, who delighted in their execution, and became, of course, familiarized to scenes of barbarity and inhumanity. He could not conceive from what the acrimony and invidiousness of the honourable gentleman arose towards those animals, except that dogs were more sagacious than any other quadruped, for some of them had wit; and if the honourable gentleman had not read Buffon, he must, at least, have heard of the learned dog. There were also ridiculous dogs, and dancing dogs, to which last, if the tax were confined, he had no objection. But the honourable gentleman said, that the tax would lower the price of sheep's heads. He should recollect, however, that the rich only fed their dogs in this manner, and the tax would have no effect to put this article more within the reach of the poor. In defence of the latter, he remarked that they destroyed weazles, rats, and other vermin, which spoilt and devoured both poultry and corn, and while he railed against their bad qualities, which were few, he never mentioned their good qualities, which were many. He next adverted to a circumstance which occurred in the Isle of Man, which probably might have roused the choler of the honourable gentleman. There a she-dog, for he would not use the ungallant expression in the Bill, once became amorous. She went abroad, and was followed by a number of ardent lovers: this

periment! The book was extant, and, entitled "*Sailors Letters*." He would recommend it to the perusal of the honourable gentleman.

The honourable gentleman had stated to the house various letters he had received from farmers and graziers, deploring the loss of their sheep. He would have now to answer them with a similar lamentation on the loss of his bill. "Swain" said they, "we have lost our sheep." To which he might reply in the strain of the old ballad, "*Shepherds, I have lost my Bill.*"

He had asserted, that the food given to a dog would maintain a child. This was a sort of levelling principle, that if it had originated on the opposition side of the House, it would have been immediately denominated the language of jacobinism. He was surprised at the letters received against the unfortunate dogs, from the honourable gentleman's correspondents at Bath.

If as the honourable gentleman had said, the gentry of Bath had come to a resolution hostile to dogs, they acted with great ingratitude to that worthy animal; for it was not long since they could not have a dinner dressed without them, as they had not a jack in the city; when the dogs, therefore absented themselves, the confusion was unparalleled; the city was in an uproar; the aldermen were distracted, and the loss of poor turnspit was attended with horrors equal to those produced by an earthquake. When they had got jacks to turn their spits, it would be ingratitude to turn tail upon their poor old servants the dogs. Indeed it was an impeachment on the morals of that city, which ought not to be submitted to silently; and it would become the honourable member for Bath to stand up in his place, and censure so very foul a reflection.

He wished to furnish gentlemen with one of those causes which led so much to the slander of this valuable animal, and since which scarcely a patient was carried to an hospital without its being reported that he was bitten by a mad dog, a period, since which the house was scared with stories of the hundreds afflicted with the ravages of the hydrophobia, though the most eminent surgeons doubted of its ever being communicated by the bite of a dog, and the late *John Hunter*, amongst others, was of opinion that the virus did not affect the system in one case out of a hundred. Mr. Courtenay next adverted to the conduct of Alexander, who the honourable gentlemen probably thought an object of imitation, who upon the death of his horse Bucephalus thought fit to put a whole Indian nation to the sword. The honourable gentleman had

affected

asserted, that the poor man found no comfort in his dog; but before he could gain credit for the assertion, he must be transmigrated agreeable to the doctrines of Pythagoras, into his soul, to discover whether or not that were the case. Mr. Courtenay proceeded a short way in a Greek quotation apposite to his remarks, but said, he would relinquish that language, first, because he wished to be understood by the honourable gentleman, and the country gentlemen: and secondly, because that on a former occasion it was not well received from an honourable lord (Lord Belgrave) who addressed the House in Greek. The old Chancellor of the Exchequer was, he said, indebted to the honourable gentleman, and if he did not conceive that the "toe of the peasant came too near the heel of the courtier, so as to gall his kibe," he should not be astonished were he to appoint him governor of the Isle of Dogs. If the Bill were to pass, nothing could be more odious and improper, it would be a stain on the humanity of parliament, it would in its effects destroy every moral feeling, and render the hearts of the people callous.

In Strasburg a tax was imposed on those unfortunate animals, and what was the consequence? Whenever the hangman went about to strangle the dogs whose masters did not pay the tax, they were followed by crowds of boys, who delighted in their execution, and became, of course, familiarized to scenes of barbarity and inhumanity. He could not conceive from what the acrimony and invidiousness of the honourable gentleman arose towards those animals, except that dogs were more sagacious than any other quadruped, for some of them had wit; and if the honourable gentleman had not read Buffon, he must, at least, have heard of the learned dog. There were also ridiculous dogs, and dancing dogs, to which last, if the tax were confined, he had no objection. But the honourable gentleman said, that the tax would lower the price of sheep's heads. He should recollect, however, that the rich only fed their dogs in this manner, and the tax would have no effect to put this article more within the reach of the poor. In defence of the latter, he remarked that they destroyed weazles, rats, and other vermin, which spoilt and devoured both poultry and corn, and while he railed against their bad qualities, which were few, he never mentioned their good qualities, which were many. He next adverted to a circumstance which occurred in the Isle of Man, which probably might have roused the choler of the honourable gentleman. There a she dog, for he would not use the ungallant expression in the Bill, once became amorous. She went abroad, and was followed by a number of ardent lovers: this

happened unfortunately just as the reverend seignors had assembled in the senate house of Keys; the lady entered, the lovers followed, the senators were thrown into the utmost consternation; the dogs barked, the seignors babbled; and in their confusion several of them were bitten. The consequence was, they punished the whole race by imposing a severe tax on the canine species. Dogs had always been the friends of man. Mr. Courtenay quoted several lines from a celebrated poem, called the Progress of Society, and said they were celebrated in the writings of every poet; Homer, Virgil, and in the Scriptures too, for they must all have read of Tobit's Dog. In short, he hoped the honourable gentleman would consider the subject in a moral point of view, and agree to withdraw the Bill.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that though he was clearly of opinion dogs were a fit object for taxation, yet he perfectly concurred in the objections made to this Bill; as he was by no means reconciled to the idea of indiscriminate taxation. On the contrary, he thought the tax could only be reconcileable to justice and sound policy, when founded on strong discrimination; to the plan of making it a parochial tax, his objections were equally strong and insuperable. He had once thought of laying a light tax on the dogs of cottagers, to be levied in a parochial way; but upon consideration of the opinions offered by gentlemen in course of discussion, he thought it better wholly to exempt from the tax all houses not assessed, unless such kept more than one, or it appeared that the dog they kept was kept to evade the tax, the owner living in an assessed house. It was also desirable, that dogs of a certain description even kept in cottages, such as greyhounds, spaniels, pointers, &c. should be taxed, as the presumption was, they would belong to some house of another description. With regard to the occupiers of assessed houses, he thought the tax a good one; it was proportioned to the value of the expenditures, and was levied on persons and on subjects fit for it.

The speculations of the ablest men who had turned their attention to finance had hitherto failed, and would fail to the end of time in discovering an universal, invariable rule of taxation, which should bear equally upon all. Under this inevitable and insurmountable difficulty, it became the duty of those upon whom the painful task of proposing public contributions might devolve, to seek for those sources of taxation which had the greatest attainable quality, and were the most free from partiality or oppression. Within this description he thought,

might

might very justly be included a tax upon such animals as people may think proper to maintain for luxury or amusement. He therefore thought a tax on the dogs of the opulent a good one, and he meant on a future day to propose, that on assessed houses there should be a tax of 3s. for the first, and 5s. on every other dog.

He said, he was himself the first to suggest to the House an objection to extending this tax to the conveniences or domestic comforts of the cottager. With that view he proposed a reduction of the tax, in such cases, to one shilling only; but subsequent reflection, and what he had heard during the present debate, induced him to incline to a total exemption from the tax in all unassessed houses. This, however, would require some regulation; as one dog was sufficient for the inhabitants of this description, an unlimited exemption might convert the hut of the poor man into the kennel of his most opulent neighbours. For this reason he would propose that the tax should attach to all assessed houses, where there should be kept more dogs than one, and also to such dogs as pointers, greyhounds, &c. which such persons could not be supposed to keep, but for the purposes of profit or depredation. If the present Bill should be negatived or withdrawn, it was his intention to propose a Bill for the objects before stated on Wednesday the 27th.

In point of regulation, it would be found, that levying it in a parochial way would not be of such use as gentlemen supposed. Gentlemen would find, that so far from the inhabitants having an interest in enforcing the tax, they would have an interest in the reverse; it would be the poor raising a tax on themselves; it was therefore a mistaken idea to think such a regulation would be either prudent or politic; for these reasons, however he might regret differing with his honourable friend, he must oppose the speaker's leaving the chair.

Mr. *Lechmere* said a few words, in which he recommended a heavy tax on fox-hounds and terriers, &c.

Mr. *Dent* explained.

The question being put, "that the speaker do now leave the chair," it was carried in the negative.

Mr. *Sheridan* moved, "That this House will, on this day three months, resolve itself into the said committee."—Carried.

ARMY EXTRAORDINARIES.

Mr. *Grey* moved, that an account be laid before the House, of all the sums issued since the twenty-ninth of October 1794,

to the fifth of April 1796, stating the services to which they were applied.—Ordered.

WESTMINSTER POLICE BILL.

On the question being put, that the House now resolve itself into a committee on this Bill,

Mr. *Sheridan* submitted whether it would not be as well to bring this subject forward the next day.

Mr. *Burton* observed that this measure had been very long before the House, and had stood for that day for the express purpose of gentlemen giving their opinions upon it; he therefore saw no reason for the delay.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that all the objections to the general principle of the Bill might as well be urged on the report as in this stage of the proceedings. This was a Bill of great importance to the police of the metropolis; and if the House were of opinion it should be passed at all, they should recollect that the session was considerably advanced.

The House then resolved itself into a committee of the whole House upon this Bill.

Upon reading the first clause of the Bill, which declared that the former police act should be perpetual, a conversation arose.

Mr. *Pouys*, said he did not approve of making the Bill perpetual. He allowed that there had been a considerable trial of it, and that it had for that time proved beneficial. But he wished it to have a further trial, such, for instance, as the term of three years. It would then be time enough to judge whether it ought to be made perpetual.

Mr. *J. H. Browne* said, he was so well convinced of the utility of this measure, and of the integrity of the gentlemen who constituted the police, that he would propose that they should continue seven years in office. When the present justices accepted their places, it was generally understood by them that the three years specified was not to limit their time in office; but that it was to be a period of probation; and that if found eligible, they were to be afterwards appointed for life. Three years duration was certainly no sufficient inducement to gentlemen to undertake such a business: therefore he would propose, that seven years be substituted instead of three. He afterwards intended, if found convenient in future, to propose that they should hold their office *in perpetuum*.

Mr. *Pouys* thought that if it was for seven years, the renewal of it would or might come at the eve of a general elec-

tion,

tion, and some persons might then apprehend that some undue influence might follow it if passed at such a time.

Mr. *Burton* thought, that if the Bill had not been sufficiently tried, there could be no objection to a further trial of it.

Sir *W. Young* agreed with the honourable gentleman who spoke before him, that their time in office should be extended; and hence, he should propose nine years, which would preclude their interference with general elections. He thought them a very respectable part of the police, and that every protection and reward possible was due to their merits and services.

Mr. *Sheridan* said he should prefer five years to seven or eight, and he should prefer three years to five, and one year to two. He wished to avoid every thing that looked like a perpetuity, as much as possible. He did not question the integrity of the magistrates who had acted under this bill; he could not however help saying it was whimsical to hear that there might be danger when the Bill came to be discussed seven years hence, because it might produce undue influence in discussion in that House, whereas it was well known that these very magistrates are at this very moment liable to be discharged at the will of his majesty's ministers.

Mr. *M. Robinson* said a few words against the influence which the Bill created.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared he objected to making the Bill perpetual, and thought it would be proper it should be continued in force only for five years. Parliament would then judge of the propriety of renewing it. He should therefore propose to negative the clause for making it perpetual, and move that it shall continue for five years, and from thence to the end of the next session of parliament.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* agreed to this proposition, under an impression that it would be extremely material to receive from time to time, as they had already received, suggestions from those who had the charge of carrying the Bill into effect; they had already been very diligent in this business, and he had no doubt would continue so.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he wished that the magistrate who acted under this Bill, since it was to pass, should be placed as near as possible to independence; they ought therefore, in his opinion, to hold their situations, as the judges did, *quam diu se bene gesserint*, and if that was not provided for in the committee, he should move it on the report.

After a short conversation, the clause for rendering the Bill perpetual was negatived, and the amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to continue it for five years, adopted.

SUPPLY.

The question being put for the House to resolve itself into a committee of supply,

Mr. *Hobart* moved, that the accounts of several expences relative to the army, the ordnance, and the provisions to be made for subaltern officers of militia, in time of peace, be referred to the said committee.—Ordered.

The *Secretary at War* moved, “That it is the opinion of this committee, that a sum not exceeding 885,673*l.* 1*9s.* 10*d.* be granted to his majesty for defraying the extraordinary expence of the army incurred and paid by the paymaster general of the forces from the fifteenth of November to the twenty-fifth of December, 1795, both inclusive, and which had not been made good by parliament.”

Mr. *Grey* said it was a little extraordinary, that, in the accounts on the table with regard to this particular, the dates of warrants at the times the sums became due, of which this sum was composed, were not specified. The House ought to have these documents perfect before them, otherwise they could not know that, of these sums, many of them ought not to have been included in former accounts, when former estimates were laid before the house.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said it was possible it might be material to lay the dates before the House in cases of this kind. But the reason why they had not been so here, was, that the whole time to which the account referred, as it stood, was little more than six weeks; and therefore perhaps the dates had not been thought necessary. At the same time, if the dates were considered material, he had not the smallest objection to producing it.

Mr. *Grey* said he apprehended that in point of fact, the expence might eventually appear neither to have been incurred or paid within that period. He remembered an account laid before the house as this might be, and which was from the twenty-fifth of December, 1794, to the twenty-fifth of December, 1795; and afterwards it appeared, when the warrants came to be seen, that it included sums due in January, 1796, almost a year before. There were various other sums, which Mr. *Grey* recited, that ought to have been included in that account. He was willing to take the right honourable gentleman's word upon the subject; at the same time it was right that the dates of the warrants, when the sums issued should appear before the House, and perhaps it would be as well not to come to this, until all these dates were upon the table.

VI. 3 Mr.

Mr. *Steele* said that this account was only a statement of what was really incurred, and paid by the pay-master-general, and this was the form in which they had always been made up.

Mr. *Grey* did not say any thing against the account as far as it went, but he wanted the date of the different warrants. These sums ought to have been stated to the House when they became due, if the minister knew of them, that the House might be made properly acquainted with the subject, as its parts appeared from time to time.

Mr. *Steele* observed, that the words *incurred and paid* were merely words of form. When an order was sent to his office, under the sign manual of his majesty, he was obliged to pay the different sums specified, which he accordingly did in the interval aforesaid.

Mr. *M. Robinson* thought that if it was possible, all the dates of the warrants should be given.

The Secretary at War said, that if these dates were wanted, they might be moved for, but the accounts as they appeared on the table, were perfectly in form, as far as they went.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, that the right honourable gentleman had taken notice of the observation of his honourable friend. He did not complain of the inaccuracy of the account of the paymaster-general. The word *incurred* was erroneous in these cases: for did not refer to the time when the sums were actually incurred, but when it became a debt on the paymaster-general. The point of his honourable friend was this, that ministers knew that warrants had been issued, and the money due; that, being aware of the charge actually existing a charge on the public, they ought to have given to the House an account when it became due to their knowledge. It might appear hereafter, that the whole of these sums which make up this vote, had been incurred when former accounts were laid before the House, and if ministers withheld that account they were to blame, because the House when it had accounts before it ought to have such accounts as nearly perfect as they could be made.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that the accounts as they stood upon the table were sufficient to justify the resolution now proposed. If the dates of the warrants were wanted, gentlemen might move for them, he had not the smallest objection to their being produced.

Mr. *Grey* moved that the chairman leave the chair for the purpose of having the accounts perfect before this resolution was voted.

The motion was put and negatived.

The resolution moved by the Secretary at War was then put and carried.

The Secretary at War then moved, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a sum not exceeding 210,194l. 14s. 11d. be granted to his Majesty for paying the expences of the Ordnance previous to the 31st of December, 1795, not provided for by parliament."—Passed. He moved another resolution, which being agreed to, and the House resumed, the report was ordered to be received.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, April 26.

The royal assent was given by commission to 55 public and private Bills.

The Marquis of Lansdown said, that the majority of the papers he had moved for being upon the table, and as he understood from ministers, that the rest were in a state of forwardness, he would move that their lordships be summoned for Monday the 2d of May.—Ordered.

DEBTOR AND CREDITOR BILL.

The order of the day being read, for the second reading of the debtor and creditor Bill,

The Earl of Moira said, that it had not been his intention to have said any thing in that stage of the business, because it had already occupied so much of their lordships' attention on former occasions; but as he understood there were to be some objections made to the Bill, he must trouble their lordships with a few observations. The former Bill that he introduced was in the recollection of the House, and no doubt their lordships had recurred to it. In the present Bill he had followed the principle of that Bill, though with the hopes of its meeting the approbation of the House, he had left out those parts of it against which the principal objections had been made; one was the provisions respecting *mesne* process, and the other was the amount of the debt. He had taken for his model the Bill of 1794, and even contrary to his own opinion, he had given up a great part of his plan, in hopes that if their lordships should be inclined to countenance the present Bill, which was little more than a continuance of the act of 1794 for two years, it would be one step towards completing a system that was much wanted, and might be carried further according to what might appear proper in the wisdom of their lordships. His conduct on the present occasion might look like pertinacity; nothing, however, but a sense of public duty,

duty, and a wish to relieve many unfortunate individuals, labouring under the most grievous hardships, could induce him to persevere in an undertaking, which, from its very nature, subjected him to numerous troublesome applications.

The Lord Chancellor left the woollack, and said he had considered the present Bill, and if it was meant to have any effect, it could not be what the noble lord had stated it to be, namely, a Bill of experiment. It resolved itself into what it really was, an innovation upon the old and established system of the law of England relative to debtor and creditor. This system had stood for ever; as far back as legal history was delivered down with any accuracy, it would be found that the law was the same. Under this system it would also be found that the commercial interests of the country, and the credit of the country had flourished and grown great. It was therefore their duty to consider well the beneficial effects of the present system, and to examine whether the proposed measure, more perfect in theory, no doubt, might not destroy the faith between man and man, the means of circulation by which we had arrived at our present prosperity, and whether it did not take away an essential advantage, without substituting any thing better or even adequate in its room. However uncouth the ancient edifice of our laws might be to the eye of the theorist, we should recollect that they had proved as beneficial as any that human wisdom could be expected to frame. It was not a question of founding a state, such as with Solon or Lycurgus, or such as carrying the sublime ideas of Plato into execution. They were to reason upon a question of practical utility to a state, whose laws and customs had been founded upon immemorial usage. His noble friend, he was satisfied, was actuated by the purest motives, and meant every thing that was just, humane, and liberal, by his bill, but he had not been successful in attaining his object. The present existing power of compulsion which the creditor had over the person of his debtor, had been attended with increase of credit. Surely then their lordships would act unwisely, as a legislative body, to pull down that fabric which had been found by experience to answer the purposes for which it was intended so well, merely to erect another, of which they knew nothing but from abstract reasoning. It was new to the laws of this country, and as far as they came under his observation, he knew not that any other country possessed such a law. It was not then a time to urge objections to the clauses; being, however, decidedly against going into the committee, he would allude

to one clause, for the sake of using it in argument. A tribunal was appointed to compel the *cessio bonorum*, and adjudge the cases which should receive benefit under this measure. He declared, he felt himself at a loss to know what possible court could be appointed competent to do the duty assigned them; indeed he knew no judge that would be competent to discharge that duty. In the court where he had the honour of sitting, and where similar business sometimes came before him, from what he there saw, he owned he should feel himself perfectly unable to execute the duties which would be imposed by the Bill. From all the cases which he had seen, the instances of humane creditors far exceeded those who were inclined to act with harshness and rigour. The law, as it now stood, he took to be thus founded. The creditor had a security in the good of his debtor; and if they failed, he had a farther security in his personal custody. This was optional, whether he would exercise it or not; and it was an additional tie upon him, and might force him to bring those goods forward for the payment of his debts, which he might otherwise secrete. Under the present Bill, however, the imprisonment of the debtor would be a mere ceremony. A debtor would go to prison *pro forma*, yield up little or nothing, and in a short time appear in affluence, while his creditor was starving. The circumstance of *mesne* process, might he thought be improved, and he should be glad to support an amelioration of that part of the law, as it appeared to him to be by no means impracticable; but the present Bill was clearly inadequate to its object, and from all he had heard upon the subject, he despaired of an effectual reform of the law of debtor and creditor. For these reasons, on account of the flourishing state of credit, and the advantages found to result from the established system, which, if it were altered, would even hurt the interest of debtors themselves, by making credit less easy to be had, he was unwilling to destroy that practice which had been sanctioned and approved by ages.

The Earl of Moira paused a few minutes, in order as he said to see what other noble lord was disposed to speak on the subject, but at length rose as he found no other peer present chose to take a part in the debate. He was sorry, he said, to see their lordships so little inclined to enter into the discussion of a business, that to him seemed to be of such magnitude and importance. As no noble lord was however pleased to come forward either with reasons to support the measure he had the honour of proposing, or with objections, shewing why it should be rejected, there was nothing left him but to endeavour

endeavour at some reply, to what had fallen from the noble and learned lord on the woolstack; who had not attended to the bill with his usual acuteness. The grounds of complaint stated by the noble and learned lord would be found in the bill of 1794. There could, he said, be but two grounds of objection to the present bill, either that it altered the old law, or that it did not substitute an adequate provision in lieu of it. To the noble and learned lord, the measure under consideration, had the aspect of a bold and hazardous innovation, which directly tended to undermine, and fundamentally shake an old established system of justice, under which the country had long flourished and enjoyed the most enviable prosperity. That however was done by the bill of 1794, and therefore was out of the question, and such a mode of reasoning, or rather of vague and indefinite observation, damped every attempt at improvement of every kind, however important the object, and however salutary the end to be obtained. He complained of the shameful preamble of the bill of 1794, and read it to show that it was a disgrace to the legislature of the most scandalous kind; with regard to the noble and learned lord's argument, that country had flourished for centuries under the old law. It was not, he said, the practice of the house to reject any proposition which might ameliorate old systems, and he conceived it to be a false principle of action to suppose perfection concentrated in our ancestors, and that every person, though born in more enlightened periods, and possessed of the confirmations of practice and comparison, because his plan happens to be novel, could not suggest an improvement. It reminded him of the contest at Madrid about clearing the streets of filth and ordure. It was once the custom at Madrid, for the inhabitants to throw out all the filth and excrements of their houses into the streets. To the friends of cleanliness, who wished to walk through the streets without the dread of being inconvenienced by so noxious a nuisance, some remedy seemed necessary to be applied. They had observed and enjoyed in other countries the comforts of cleanliness, and proposed that the nuisance might be put a stop to, and proper conveniences established. No sooner was the proposal made, and attempted to be carried into effect, than a loud and violent clamour was raised against it. It was contended that Madrid had long flourished under the influence of the old custom; that there was something sharp in the air which was softened and corrected by the *mephytic effluvia* of the jakes cast into the street, and that it would be dangerous to attempt any change that might so materially injure the health and constitution of the

the inhabitants. At length, however, the friends of reform succeeded; the improvement took place, and those who had argued against it, were ashamed of their former reasoning. The earl apologized to the lord chancellor for having mentioned the story, as he was, he said, the last man to apply any thing of a light and ludicrous nature to any argument of the noble and learned lord, or indeed to any subject so grave and serious as the Bill under consideration.

Another position laid down by the noble and learned lord, and urged as a forcible objection against the clauses of the Bill, was, that it had a direct tendency to affect trade and unhinge that great wheel of circulation, on which the various and extensive commerce of this country turned. This indeed was a serious and insuperable objection if justly grounded; the reverse, upon due consideration, would appear to be the truth, for the relief that was endeavoured to be procured for the debtor in certain cases, would be found to be advantageous, rather than detrimental to the creditor; who, if not repaid the whole of what he had advanced, would at least, by this compulsory *cessio bonorum*, be indemnified, as far as indemnity could be secured. He expatiated on the cases of fraudulent contractors of debt, to whom the benefit of his Bill was not to be extended; and declared he meant to favour honest debtors only, being free to confess that he believed, nineteen debtors out of twenty were fraudulent and not entitled to the consideration of the legislature.† Of persons who contracted debt *bona fide*, but who from unforeseen misfortunes became really and truly insolvent, he said, he wished to stand forward the champion. He looked to the twentieth man, who ought not to be left to the mercy of a rigid creditor, when his distress was the effect of misfortune and not of crime. It was the unwarranted sufferings of such that he was anxious to press home on the attention and feelings of their lordships; and were he to appeal to authorities on the subject, there were none stronger or more respectable than that of Dr. Johnson in his papers of the Idler, where he says, after enumerating these sufferings, that if such circumstances fail to move those to whom he addressed himself, he must leave their feelings to be awakened by some other power; that, for his own part, he wrote only to *human beings*.

The precarious and uncertain condition of debtors, when left wholly at the mercy and discretion of their creditors, his

† The earl stated the case of Pope, who went to prison to avoid paying a fine of 10,000l. and determined to live there, which he did till he died, thought worth 40,000l. and his creditor was never satisfied.

lordship said, loudly claimed the interposition of the legislature. Among a vast variety of cases, he would only detain their lordships' attention, while he related one of them, consigned to him by letter, and to which he was led to attend from an accidental recollection of the name by which it was subscribed. This was the case of a foreigner, who was imprisoned for a large sum, and who was wholly destitute of every means to pay and get released. On inquiring into the merits of this case, it was found that this foreigner had lingered in prison for two years, under very severe and painful circumstances, and very probably might have there terminated a miserable existence: after much fruitless research, it was at length discovered that he had been arrested by a man who was forced to fly the country, on suspicion of his having come here with some mischievous intent. Had he not stirred in the case, the poor foreigner might have been imprisoned beyond all conception. There were doubtless a number of cases of the same sort, which might be easily adduced; but they must be familiar to the knowledge of their lordships, and of every man acquainted, even imperfectly, with the state of our prisons.

The noble and learned lord had remarked, that the Bill he introduced would diminish the general circulation of credit throughout the country, and thereby occasion many inconveniences to persons of confined income, who at present are able to carry on larger schemes by that means. That was precisely the very object he wanted to effect. He considered it one of the most important duties of a wise legislature to check the young and thoughtless in their career, and watch over their morals and conduct. There were too many persons who supported themselves in an extravagant way, by the credit they obtained, who if that credit were checked, would moderate their habits, and be able to satisfy their just demands.

The earl said, he would have made a reply to another part of the noble and learned lord's speech but he did not immediately recollect it. (Lord Thurlow hinted, the objection stated by the Lord Chancellor was, that the bill was temporary.) The earl thanked the noble and learned lord for his putting him in mind of that objection. He assigned the reasons which had induced him to make the Bill temporary, and said, it was to render it the more acceptable to their lordships, who might receive what was a Bill of experiment, when they might feel scruples at giving their sanction to a permanent measure. He himself wished the Bill to be permanent for a variety of causes, but under the circumstances of the case, he was willing to do as much for the unfortunate and honest debtor,

debtor, as he could, if he found it impracticable to do all that he desired. He said, he had studiously avoided that declamation and appeal to the passions, to which the subject was peculiarly open, and he should be extremely sorry if he failed. He had many alterations to propose in the committee, and he had heard no objection that in his mind went against the Bill's going to a committee. The length of time the law had stood as it did, was in his opinion the strongest argument for the Bill; experience had proved the inconvenience of the existing law and the necessity for a reform, and all reform was more or less an innovation. Convinced as he was of the propriety of a reform, even should he now stand alone, he would not be disconcerted, or deterred from his resolution, but would, with unwearied and un baffled perseverance, again and again bring forward the measure in one shape or another, till he at length succeeded in making it palatable to their lordships.

Lord Thurlow said, he meant to be very short; he agreed with the objections of the noble and learned lord on the woolfack, but he saw little difference between the objections and the argument of the noble earl. For his own part, he objected to the Bill, as inadequate to remove the evil it was intended to remedy; and particularly as injurious to the interests of trade. The noble earl had misapprehended the noble and learned lord on the woolfack respecting the credit of the country; the noble lord meant that it would affect the general credit, which was the great medium of the country's manufactures, its trade and its commerce, and without which neither could go on. What might be the result of any attempt to change or new model it, he would not take upon him distinctly to pronounce, but any innovation in a system so complex and delicate, should be cautiously avoided, as it must hazard, if not materially affect, that source from which all the energies of the country arise; and on which alone depend all our prosperity and much envied resources. His lordship proceeded to state the points, in which the noble earl and the learned lord on the woolfack agreed, and the little difference that remained. And what was the object to be obtained by this change in the mode of administering justice? The noble earl said, he believed nineteen out of twenty to be fraudulent debtors. Would it then be becoming a just legislature to look for the twentieth man, as the noble earl recommended and applied a law to his relief, which would open a door to the frauds that would be practised in consequence by nineteen twentieths of all the debtors in the kingdom? Would it not be a harsh measure dealt out by a legislature which had given inducements

inducements to creditors to believe that they had a security for their property in the power of compulsion upon their debtor, and then after upon the faith of that, they had suffered men to run in debt, on a sudden to take away the creditor's only security. He remembered the case alluded to by the noble earl, of a man going to prison for 10,000*l.* and living there till he died, when it turned out that he was worth 40,000*l.* It was shameful undoubtedly, but what was the fit remedy. The noble earl had himself suggested it. Reform the prisons, make imprisonment penal as it ought to be, and do not suffer any thing like a household to be established in a prison. Let imprisonment be felt to be imprisonment, by confining the debtor to jail allowance, and thus rendering it a serious thing to be kept in prison. A real *cessio bonorum*, his lordship said, should be attended with no imprisonment, but whatever the house did upon the business, he beseeched the house most earnestly to make it permanent, and not to harass the subject and perplex those concerned in the distribution of justice, with temporary or half measures. For these reasons, he declared himself decidedly against the present Bill.

Lord Kenyon owned he had not leisure to give the matter full consideration, and only meant to utter a few sentences. He said he was persuaded that the noble earl was actuated by the best and purest motives, but a Bill of that nature was a matter of great delicacy and difficulty, and could not be too well considered. Though the Bill was not then in a committee, he had been obliged to look into it to see what it turned on. The first clause he thought highly objectionable, as it held out an encouragement to every species of profligacy and vice. It afforded to every man who had committed any enormity short of a felony, be it ever so injurious to society, an easy refuge. Gamblers, who to supply their means of ruining the inexperienced and unwary, did not hesitate to rifle and destroy the warehouses of the merchant, would by the provisions of the Bill, be enabled to pursue their iniquitous courses, and then have nothing to do but to go through the ceremony of going to prison, in order to return into the world again in a short time in affluence, while the creditors they had been the means of distressing were suffering the severest misfortunes. The same might be said of those whose infamous trade it was to seduce the wives and daughters of families, and upon whom it was of late the wise opinion of juries that very heavy penalties should be inflicted. There were also various other cases, inconceivably painful for those to hear who were obliged to listen to them, which being short of felony, under

such a Bill could scarcely be punished at all. Nor was the first a single clause, the principle of it pervaded the whole Bill, and therefore, at the same time that he thought those, who persevered in what they thought a right cause, so far from deserving censure, were entitled to commendation in a great degree, he must object to the Bill, as highly detrimental to the mercantile part of the community, whose interests ought always, especially in a nation like ours, to be most anxiously and minutely attended to.

Lord Moira in explanation said, the first clause which the noble and learned lord who spoke last, objected to, was taken from the Act of 1794. He then replied to Lord Thurlow's objections, severally answering each; after which the question was put, that the Bill be committed; upon which the House divided:

<i>Non-Contents</i>	-	-	9
<i>Contents</i>	-	-	2
			—
<i>Majority against the Bill</i>	-	-	7

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, April 26.

The *Speaker*, accompanied by several members of the House, attended, conformably to summons, in the House of Lords, to hear the commission read enabling certain peers to give the royal assent, to several public and private Bills.

The public Bills were the Legacy Tax Bill, the Test Act Indemnity Bill, and the Scarborough Free Port Bill.

CONVEYANCE OF NEWSPAPERS, &c.

The report of the committee appointed to inquire into the facts alledged in the petition from the clerks in the Secretary of State's office, respecting the Bill for the better conveyance of newspapers, and the printed votes of parliament, was brought up, and referred to a committee of the whole House.

Mr. *Canning* stated in the committee, that it appeared from the report that the clerks in the offices of the two Secretaries of State would sustain a considerable diminution of emolument, were the Bill allowed to pass, as it would dispossess them of a privilege which they had hitherto enjoyed of franking newspapers, and the printed votes of parliament; and for this loss, he submitted it to the committee that it would be proper to grant them a fair compensation. On a former occasion,

occasion, when the regulation took place with regard to the postage to Ireland, the clerks of the Secretary of State stated the loss which they would sustain, and on a consideration of the fact an allowance of 1000*l.* was made to them. Should the present Bill for the better conveyance of newspapers pass, the privilege the clerks would be deprived of was of considerably greater value; they had however agreed to accept of this sum, at the same time, they by no means pledged themselves by petitioning for this indemnification, not to oppose the Bill in a future stage. He moved, "That an annual sum of 1000*l.* be granted to his majesty to be distributed among the clerks in the offices of the two secretaries of state, as a compensation for the loss they may sustain from this Bill passing into a law.

Mr. *Bouverie* objected to the committee voting an indemnification for a loss which had not yet been sustained.

Mr. *Canning* said that the indemnification was merely provisional, and if the Bill was thrown out, the resolution of the committee would never take effect.

Mr. *Harrison* opposed the resolution, as a part of a Bill which would saddle the country with an expence of 1000*l.* a year, when he was not certain that they would gain as much by the Bill.

Mr. *Francis* resisted the proposition upon the ground of its being informal in the House of Commons to pass a positive resolution upon an hypothetical case.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to obviate the objection in point of form. It was agreed on all hands, that it was fair and reasonable, if the Bill passed, to grant the indemnification along with it. This, however, was done in the most regular mode, by voting an instruction to the committee upon the Bill, to receive a clause to this effect; and there could be no danger in this mode of proceeding; if the Bill did not pass, this clause, which would form a part of the Bill, would, of course be ineffective.

Mr. *Canning* urged it upon the committee, that this was merely a provisional indemnification for a possible loss, and if the loss was not sustained, the indemnification would of course never be granted, because in that case it would be unnecessary.

The resolution was agreed to by the committee, and the report ordered to be received the next day.

CORN BILL.

The order of the day for the second reading of the Bill for the sale of corn by weight being moved and read,

The Lord Mayor said, that it would be utterly impracticable to weigh all the corn consumed in this metropolis. He gave notice, therefore, that in the committee on the Bill, he would move for the insertion of a clause to exempt the port of London from this provision.

The Bill was read a second time, and referred to a select committee.

RELIEF OF THE QUAKERS.

Mr. Serjeant Adair, in pursuance of his notice, rose to call the attention of the House, to the nature of the relief from certain legal difficulties and hardships, which he intended to move for in behalf of the Quakers. He did not mean to question the facts on which Quakers had been imprisoned on account of conscientious and religious scruples which they entertained with regard to their mode of paying tythes.—He did not intend to discuss the wisdom of such scruples. Nor should he propose any thing that would interfere with the just rights of those to whom tythe was due from Quakers. Neither did he mean to proceed in any other way than he should have proceeded, had he not known what the law was in this case, and had not heard of any case of hardship on individuals. He went into an ample detail of his object in the present measure, as well as the history of acts of parliament as they had been made from the 7th and 8th of King William, downwards. By the religious scruples of the Quakers, they could not, he said, make a voluntary payment of tythes to any person demanding it, however well they might be entitled to it by the law of the land, conceiving it to be contrary to the divine precepts of holy writ, and in consequence of these scruples they were subject to great inconveniences. The legislature had been impressed with a sense of this difficulty long since, and an act of parliament had passed in consequence, which had been the law for the greater part of the present century, whereby the justice of peace might make an order for the sale of the defendant's goods who had been found to owe tythes, and who being a Quaker could not make any voluntary payment; this extended, however, only to the sum of ten pounds. It had been found, as far as it went, to answer the beneficial purposes for which it was intended. His intention therefore was to follow the principle of that law, but to

take

take off the limitation which confined it to ten pounds, and to make it general. No inconvenience would arise from granting to the justice this summary jurisdiction, because an appeal might be had to the quarter sessions, and therefore, let the power be what it might, it was subject to appeal, and all that he should propose to do in this part of the case, was simply to remove the restraint which confined the jurisdiction to the sum of ten pounds. There would, however, still remain a case, to which the remedy of the act he alluded to did not apply, and that was when the title was in question. That he proposed to be removed, to be tried in a court of law, like other titles, and when the question of title shall have been settled, then the mode of obtaining the dues on that title shall return again, and be subject to the same summary jurisdiction, as if the title had never been in question at all. This would produce the whole remedy upon this branch of the case. He should propose further to remedy another defect, with regard to enforcing payments of tythes; that where the party had not goods in one county, and that wherein he shall dwell, sufficient to pay all that should be due for litigating the issue, a sequestration shall be issued against his effects, as in other cases, until the demand shall have been fully satisfied. The only beneficial effect of this would be, that the plaintiff who shall sue for and recover his tythes, shall not be at liberty to make his election and imprison the defendant, while such defendant shall have goods enough to satisfy the demand, because in that option consisted the hardship against the Quaker; if he was imprisoned for it, he must either be confined for life, although he may have goods to pay, or give up his conscience, and do a deed which he thought against the law of God. Such the Quaker considered the act of voluntary payment of tythes. All they asked therefore was, that while their goods were sufficient to pay tythes, such goods might be taken from them, and that no person claiming tythes from them should have the power to imprison them instead of taking their goods.

If the House thought that the provisions which he now stated would be expedient, he was persuaded that the justice and humanity of the House would readily adopt them. No right of property was here invaded; on the contrary, all rights of that kind were protected. To shew that there was no innovation in the law by what he intended to propose in the Bill, should the House give him leave to bring it in, he quoted the precedent in an insolvent act, by which the same principle that he now brought forward was established. He had stated
thus

thus much of the object for which he meant to move for leave to bring in the Bill, because he did not wish to waste the time of the House by bringing in a Bill, the nature of which the House did not know, and which afterwards they might think necessary to reject. If he considered it to be of that description, he would not move for it. Having stated this, he should say he had stated all that the Quakers desired to be stated on their part. There was, however, another subject which, although the Quakers did not desire it, (some few, indeed, desired otherwise) he found it his duty to state to the House. This was the restriction in taking the affirmation of Quakers. By the law as it stood, they could not be examined on their affirmation in any but civil actions. He owned, he was not able to discover the wisdom of the distinction. By examination of them on affirmation in civil cases, the benefit of their testimony was confined to the interest of private individuals, who are the suitors of the courts of justice. By taking their affirmation in criminal cases, the public would be benefited by their testimony. Some important failures in the administration of justice in consequence of this restriction had, he declared, fallen within his immediate knowledge. He should therefore propose that Quakers should be examined on their affirmation in criminal cases, subject, as they are at present in civil cases, to all the consequences of perjury. These were all the points which he intended to be comprehended in the measure which he had the honour to submit to the House. He then moved "That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the further relief of the people called Quakers, as to the imprisonment of their persons, for non-payment of tythes, and for making their solemn affirmation evidence in criminal as well as civil cases."

Mr. *Wilberforce* seconded the motion, and said that as his honourable and learned friend had so fully and so clearly explained the object of the Bill, he desired leave to bring in, it would be superfluous for him to take up the time of the House, by saying more, than that it had and should have his most hearty concurrence and support.

Mr. *Fran. is* declared he was as desirous as any man to give every possible relief and protection to persons who were really and sincerely scrupulous, in a religious sense, about paying tythes. His doubt was, whether in some cases, these scruples might not be professed where they are not seriously felt, for ostentation or for merit, or in hopes to pass for victims or martyrs with their sect; and then, generally, whether it might

might not deserve consideration how far it might be safe and prudent for the legislature to encourage the profession or plea of religious scruples against obedience to the laws; how far that indulgent principle ought to be carried, and by what general limits it ought to be confined in its application.

With respect to the other objects of the learned gentleman, viz. "to accept of the affirmation of Quakers in criminal cases, as it is at present in civil suits," he gave it his entire approbation. Undoubtedly the public ought to have the benefit of their evidence as well as individuals. He confided very much in the learned gentleman's learning and judgment; and he hoped, he would take an opportunity of giving the House his thoughts on the principle of the question generally, that is, on the indulgence due to tender consciences, when opposed to positive laws, and how far it should be extended. In the mean time, he agreed with the learned gentleman entirely in his present views, as far as they went, and heartily approved of his bringing in the Bill.

Mr. *Martin* said, he felt highly obliged to the honourable and learned gentleman for the motion, and he could not help expressing his sincere and hearty wishes that the Bill should pass. It would do justice to a worthy body of people (than whom none were better subjects) and shew a wise and indulgent attention to their religious scruples.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he should be as unwilling to give extraordinary indulgence to scruples that are not sincere as the honourable gentleman who spoke lately (Mr. *Francis*), but he wished to observe that there was no temptation here for persons to pretend to scruples falsely, since by so doing they would be subject to much more rigour with regard to tythes than if they did not pretend to them. He thought, therefore, the number would not be great, of those who pretended to scruples which would subject them to inconvenience.

Sir. *W. Dolben* approved highly of the proposed regulations, and thought they would be equally beneficial to the Quakers, and those entitled to tythes. He hoped, however, that time would be given to consider the subject maturely, as it would make a material alteration in the existing law.

Mr. *Lechmere* said, he felt happy to see any measure for the relief so worthy and respectable a body of men. As subjects, they were patient and submissive; as traders, punctual and just; as members of society, friendly, peaceable, and moderate. In the city he represented, they (formed without meaning any reflection on the other classes) a most meritorious society,

ciety; no one of whom, if he adhered to the just principles of his religion, ever fell as a burthen on the parish; but in distress was upheld and supported by the other members.

Mr. *Wigley* spoke in favour of the measure, and in praise of the Quakers in general.

Mr. *Adair's* motion then passed *nem con.*

SLAVE CARRYING BILL.

Mr. *Wilberforce* said, he would preface what he had to move with a very few words. If he was to exercise his own judgment, and follow the bent of his own imagination, he would certainly make a motion to prohibit the exportation of slaves into the colonies. The House must recollect, that all that was required by the planters, on a former occasion, was gradually to abolish the trade, and to fill up the chasm in their estate, necessary to that salutary object. Since 1790 full time had been given to accomplish their desire. It was his intention at present to move, that one slave per ton should be allowed and no more, to every ship of 200 tons; and four for every ton to every ship above that tonnage. If this motion was adopted, he would then move that no other ships than those at present in the service should be in future employed. Mr. *Wilberforce* moved, "That no greater number of slaves than the proportion of one for every ton up to 200 tons, be suffered to be exported from the Coast of Africa into any of the West-India islands." The necessity of this resolution he argued from the fact, that since the House had framed a resolution for the gradual abolition of the trade, the number of ships embarked in it had increased. Mr. *Wilberforce* professed, that in these resolutions he had a further reference to the desirable object of bringing about an entire abolition, and that he should wish that early in the next session the House would consider the means of abolishing the slave trade entirely.

General Tarleton said, he was surprised to find a motion of that importance brought forward at that late period of the session; it was, in fact, tantamount to a prohibition of the trade, as those new restrictions would render the importation of slaves so expensive, that the merchants and planters would not be able to fill up the chasms to which the honourable gentleman adverted. The honourable gentleman, he said, had brought forth no new arguments or facts; had produced no complaints of hardship or cruelty towards the slaves, ever since the act passed in their favour in 1788.—He could not, therefore, suppose that the House would now

entertain

entertain the motions, especially when they recollected the state of the West-India islands, and the situation of this country, engaged in an extensive war. If military operations in the West-Indies are now necessary, a great number of negroes would be wanting to fill up the black regiments; and he believed it would have been more for the interests of humanity, if more black regiments had been employed, because every British soldier sent to the West Indies, before he could be actively employed there, cost his country 200*l*. whereas a negro, besides being more seasoned to the climate, would not cost above 80*l*. In the hope of advantages to be derived from employing black regiments, General Tarleton insisted that it would be inconsistent to think of putting restrictions upon the trade, which would damp the zeal and activity of merchants and planters, and impede the operations of government. In a word, he thought that if gentlemen regarded the preservation of the West India islands, they would not accede to the measure now proposed.

Mr. *Jenkinson* considered the motion, if carried, as nothing more than a tax on slaves; and the present Bill, he insisted, was ample and adequate to the ends proposed in the motion made by his honourable friend. Mr. *Jenkinson* professed that he wished the adoption of such regulations as these, that the coast of Africa should be made an Admiral's station, and that no ship with slaves should sail from thence without the Admiral's enforcing the regulations respecting tonnage, &c. also that governors should be established at those particular places where the trade was carried on. Mr. *Jenkinson* declared, that he had been always an enemy to fixing a particular period for the abolition of the trade; at the same time, he was convinced, that under wise and salutary regulations its continuance would be but short.

Mr. *Ryder* supported the motion, and said, he thought that the opposition to the measure proposed by his honourable friend, arose from the candor with which he had stated the extent of his wishes for an abolition; but, independent of this, he considered the particular reason sufficient for adopting it, that during the middle passage, the slaves were exposed to great hardships and mortality. He said, that from a paper which was put into his hand by an honourable friend (Mr. *Rose*); for the last three years, the loss per cent in the importation of slaves from the coast of Africa, by mortality, was estimated at 16 the first, 17 the second, and 18 the last. The diminution, therefore, of the mortality, by allowing greater tonnage, would be an advantage instead of a loss to the

merchants and planters, and he conceived this the most lenient of all other modes of accomplishing an abolition.

Mr. *Rose* did not object to the regulation respecting tonnage, if it would prevent mortality among the slaves. He said that the paper alluded to, had been put by him into the hands of the honourable gentleman; but the number of deaths had not been fairly stated, as it was only in the slaves from certain parts that the mortality was so great as described. In some it had only been four *per cent.* some one, so as little to exceed the ordinary calculations of mortality among other men.

Mr. *Ryder* explained.

General *Tarleton* said, since a paper was alluded to, on which argument was founded, it should be properly before the House.

Mr. *Dundas* said, that he had never seen the paper that had been mentioned, and if any argument were to be founded on it, it should be regularly moved for. He perfectly concurred in the object of the propositions so far as they went to improve the situation of the slaves in the middle passage, but he owned, he was startled when he heard that they were directed to abolition. With regard to the prohibition of new ships entering the trade, it must depend upon the fact, whether many ships had lately entered, or whether the present ships were old in trade and would retire. His approbation or disapprobation would follow according as this fact turned out. He thought since they were at variance in their statement of facts, they should wait for correct information. He cautioned the honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) against attempting indirectly to effect the abolition, or loading the present Bill with clauses that would occasion opposition that would prove fatal to it both in this and the other house, and thus defeat a measure about which all were agreed, and from which much advantage had accrued.

Mr. *Barham* opposed the propositions, and stated that the islands would not be averse from abolition moderately and prudently conducted; but the House having already this session declined an abolition of the trade, an indirect attempt of this nature, which was avowed by the honourable gentleman, who introduced it was somewhat indecorous, as well as inconsistent with their late determinations.

Mr. *Francis* said, he would give his cordial assent to any measure that would ameliorate the condition of the unfortunate Africans. From a cursory view of the statement, he drew an average that the mortality was at least a loss of nine

or

or ten per cent. This was an argument that ought to induce the House to consider the fact; if a saving occurred in the loss by mortality, that would recompence the planters and merchants for what they should suffer by an additional expence.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* declared, that after the late determination of the House, he should object to his honourable friend's motion, if he considered it in the light of an indirect abolition; as such, the measure proposed would be nugatory, for it would merely add about 2l. to the price of a negro. He professed to be one of those who deplored the African slave trade; he could not therefore desire its extension by the employment of new capitals, or the encrease of plantations. He compared the allowance of tonnage in slave ships with that allowed in the transport service, to soldiers and convicts, and argued that the House should be equally careful of the health of the negroes. If it was a matter of doubt whether the House might not go further than the measure suggested, this could be no ground of objection why they should not at least go as far. He shewed that the mortality among the negroes exceeded what some gentlemen supposed. Upon these grounds the Chancellor of the Exchequer enforced the regulations suggested.

Mr. *Barham* explained.

Mr. *Dundas* said; he did not wish to insinuate that a sufficient tonnage should not be allowed; his object was merely that the House should be put in possession of every necessary information, to enable them to ascertain the quantity which should be allowed. He therefore trusted, that gentlemen would not by persisting in the clauses, reduce those who opposed them to put the Bill, which was in other respects a good one, in a questionable shape. He wished the paper on the table, on which a good deal seemed to be founded, and that the Chairman should report progress, and ask leave to sit again that they might be able to take up the subject with full information.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, a delay of a few days was necessary to furnish the House with grounds to form an estimate of the mortality which took place in the middle passage. In that time the proper papers might be laid before the House for the satisfaction of gentlemen, though he was then perfectly convinced, that some extension of tonnage should be adopted, even perhaps exceeding that which had been proposed in the committee by his honourable friend.

Mr. *Wilberforce* and Mr. *Secretary Dundas* explained.

Lord *Sheffield* said, that the measure of abolition, as proposed

posed by the right honourable gentleman, would make the West-India islands a curse to the country; whereas they were at present the most valuable acquisition we had, as the country derived an annual produce of twenty-four millions from them. He would not therefore concur in any future arrangement that went to injure our colonial interests.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, and declared, that no motive of interest either with respect to commercial or territorial acquisitions, could induce him to consent to the extension or aggrandizement of the slave trade. When he expressed a hope for the concurrence of the House with him, he had no idea of attaching, in any undue manner, the noble lord to his cause. What he said was merely in consequence of what he heard at all times before, and then in particular, of the general wish that the trade should one day cease. If this was granted, if the extension of the trade was considered, not merely inhuman, but impolitic, he was aware, and he trusted the House would think with him, that measures should be put in train for the insensible and gradual abolition which was looked to. It was before urged, that when the sexes were proportioned to maintain a population of the slaves in the islands, the trade itself should be abolished. He trusted the House, and the planters themselves were sincere in that proposition; and that the horrid commerce was not to continue, and be daily and yearly extended. He trusted the House would even see the policy of giving up partial and temporary considerations for future and solid advantages---that they would not, for any motives of lucre, pursue measures that would fully the glory of our commercial and territorial interests.

HAT DUTY.

The House resolved itself into a committee of the whole House on the hat duty Bill.

It was fixed that after the 5th of April, 1797, every person wearing a hat with the lining unstamped, should be liable in the penalty.

Mr. Martin asked if a person wearing a hat without a lining was liable?

Mr. Rose said the words were for any person wearing a hat without a lining properly stamped.

Mr. W. Smith asked whether a person getting a new hat lined, would be liable to the tax?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that those who paid the tax to any considerable amount, were not likely to be in the practice

practice of new lining their hats; and where the hat was of inferior price, oeconomy would not be obstructed by the trifling additional duty.

A clause was brought up, by which the owner of a hat is compelled to prove that his hat paid the duty.

The House was then resumed, and the report ordered to be received.

BLACK LEAD DUTY BILL.

The House in a committee for imposing certain duties on black lead imported into Great-Britain, came to the following resolutions:—"That a duty of 1s. per cwt. be laid on black lead imported:—and that 6d be allowed on every cwt. exported."

The resolutions were reported, and ordered to be received to-morrow.

CORN.

Mr. Lechmere lamented the thinness of the House to go into a committee for remedying the present scarcity of corn; and hence he was induced to move, that the order of the day be read. The order being read, he moved that it be discharged, and fixed for Friday se'ennight, the sixth of May, on which day he would most certainly submit his intended motion.—Ordered.

CITY MILITIA.

The House resolved itself into a committee, for reducing two acts of the two last sessions of parliament into one, for the better regulation of the city militia. Several amendments were proposed and agreed to. The House being resumed, the report was ordered to be received on Friday next.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

WEDNESDAY, April 27.

Heard counsel on a Scots appeal, *Cameron v. Cameron*.

The Bills on the table were read in their different stages.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, April 27.

The report of the committee for regulating the importation of black lead was brought up, read, and agreed to; as was that on the importation of mahogany.

The

The reverend Mr. Jones's divorce Bill passed a committee of the whole House.

Mr. *Charles Long* moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the more effectually preventing the landing of goods, wares, and merchandize, without submitting them to the inspection of proper officers, and who shall make certain regulations in the landing of Wine, &c. Granted.

SUMMER THEATRE.

Sir Watkin Lewes moved for leave to bring in a Bill to enable his Majesty to license as a summer theatre the house in Wellclose Square, in the liberty of the Tower Hamlets.

Mr. *Mainwaring* said, it would be extraordinary if the House should agree to passing a Bill of this kind, after they had refused the very same thing, when he moved it a few years ago. At all events such a matter as this deserved much more consideration than could be expected to be given to it in so thin a House; and therefore he hoped the worthy alderman would postpone the consideration of the motion for a few days; with this view he moved, that the debate upon this subject should be adjourned to Monday next.

Sir Watkin Lewes said, he thought it a little extraordinary that the honourable gentleman, who had been so strenuous an advocate for this very measure some time ago, should on the present occasion, be so ready to oppose even its introduction, however he had no objection to its being discussed in a fuller House, and therefore he should not oppose the adjournment of it to Monday.

The question was then put, and the debate was adjourned to Monday next.

INDEMNIFICATION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S CLERKS.

The report of the committee for allowing 1000*l.* a year between the clerk's of the secretary of state's office, as a compensation to them for the loss they may sustain in consequence of the passing of a Bill now depending for the regulation of printed votes of parliament and newspapers, was brought up and read.

Mr. *Fekyll* declared he had no desire to oppose the granting of this compensation, he wished however to be informed, whether the report of the committee who took into consideration the subject of the salaries and emoluments of these gentlemen, had ever been considered and acted upon by the executive government.

The

The Chancellor of the Exchequer answered in the affirmative, and said, that many of the recommendations of that committee had been acted upon. Some things had indeed been done contrary to the opinion of those commissioners, but on the whole of the matter the executive government had done what appeared to them to be the most beneficial for the public, and that many very salutary, as well economical regulations, had taken place in the post office.

The resolution of the committee for this conditional allowance to the clerks was then read, and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

The House resolved itself into a committee of ways and means.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that in consequence of all that had been before advanced respecting the dog tax (which he meant as a substitute for another article of taxation, found advisable to be relinquished,) he would not trouble the committee with many words. He meant merely to move a resolution, which, if agreed to by the committee, would be the ground-work of a Bill. The resolution was to the following effect :—“ That in all assessed houses, keeping no more than one dog, the duty for the same should be three shillings : that in assessed and unassessed houses, where more than one dog was kept, a duty of five shillings should be paid on each dog ; that a sporting dog kept in any house should be liable to a duty of five shillings ; and lastly that all unassessed houses, keeping no more than one dog (unless that dog came under the denomination of sporting or luxury,) should be exempt from all duty whatever.” This, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he considered to be so fair, that he thought it could meet no great objection.

Mr. Dent rose, and repeated many of his arguments on a former night against the principle of the tax, in the manner in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer meant to make it attach. In his bill, his design was that the whole produce should go in aid of the poor rates, and not to the revenue. The principle of this Bill, Mr. Dent said, was to prevent canine madness, by the destruction of dogs which were neither of use nor comfort to individuals. By this plan the middling class would in a great measure be relieved from the burthens which are of late very heavy in the increase of poor rates. Though his Bill had been rejected on a former night, after drawing forth much wit and ridicule, particularly from an honourable gentleman (Mr. Courtenay,) whom he

he saw then in his place, he was still so convinced of the good tendency of its principle and provisions, that he should take the sense of the House respecting the Chancellor of the Exchequer's resolution: and he was able to inform the right honourable gentleman, by a letter he had received from Durham, that such was the effect of his speech respecting this business on a former night, that the poor in that part of the country were already canvassing for having the dogs of the rich divided among them to evade the tax. This, he had before suggested, would be the case--the squire would send his dogs to the cottager to avoid the tax; the dogs would be thus divided, and more mischief would arise. Beside, the poor man, he was aware, would be often obliged to remove his own dog to make room for the squire's dog; and thus the great cause of humanity which gentlemen so much contended for in the instance of the poor man's dog, would be lost.

Mr. *Jelliffe* professed himself adverse to the discrimination of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Dogs of luxury might be kept at the tenant's houses, and thus the tax avoided.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that the hon. gentleman had come back again to the question which had been before debated, whether the tax should go in aid of the revenue, or to diminish the number of dogs. As to the several arguments which the honourable gentleman (Mr. Dent) had then used, they were sufficiently answered on a former night. With regard to the correspondence which the honourable gentleman had mentioned, the House certainly could not give it much weight: Unless some of the telegraphs had been at work to send his speech to Durham, he was not aware how it could so soon have reached that city, and a report of its effect and impression have been returned to town so early. Could it since Monday night last, if conveyed so far, directly have such extraordinary operation? The argument was against the honourable gentleman; in consequence of his bill which has been rejected, gentlemen who wished to evade the tax, poachers, and the like, were for lodging their dogs with the poor; they would, however, find themselves disappointed. To another honourable gentleman (Mr. *Jolliffe*), he would say, that the very distinctions which he disapproved did away his objections. Gentlemen would see that they could not evade the tax by sending dogs of sport to their tenants; and it was not likely that ladies would lose the society of their lap dogs, and send them to cottagers' houses to evade the duty.

Captain Berkley declared, that he approved of the tax, but

he wished the distinction to be well ascertained:—he was for adding the words lurchers or terriers.

Mr. *Buxton* said, he unwillingly opposed any measure that went in aid of the revenue to support a just and necessary war: but he thought the measure injurious to the landed interest. If dogs of sport were taxed, the country would lose its attraction, and be deserted.

Mr. *Courtenay* said, that the present measure was exceedingly unexceptionable and equitable. He should have been silent, if the honourable gentleman (Mr. *Dent*) had not alluded to him. Since the late debate on the subject, he had looked into the Transactions of the Philosophical Society at Manchester, and there he found the elaborate dissertation, by a very skilful gentleman, who kept hounds himself, that the general idea of canine madness and hydrophobia was entirely erroneous. He trusted that the country gentlemen were too liberal and humane to saddle their dogs (as the honourable gentleman said) on the poor, and there was no reason to fear that ladies would give their lap dogs to be nursed by farmers and tenants, in order to evade the tax.

The whole of the honourable gentleman's opinion respecting canine madness was so much out of the way, and the frame and provisions of his late Bill were so eccentric, that he presumed he had borrowed the whole from a famous work, intitled *The Travels of Baron Munchausen*: the honourable gentleman however was in earnest, whereas the Baron meant a mere joke. In the 210th page of that book, the Baron relates that he was one night disturbed by an unusual noise in his chamber; and rising, to his great surprise, found that his large fur cloak had been bitten by a mad dog—that the madness was communicated to his coat, waistcoat and breeches—and, in short, that such at last was the mad and furious state of his wardrobe, that he was obliged to call in the peace officers to his aid.

Mr. *Dent* said, that the honourable gentleman's speech on a former night was so ridiculous, that he must be indebted to Joe Miller's Jests for his materials. If an honourable gentleman (Mr. *Sheridan*), who was not then in his place, erected a stage in Bartholomew fair, and retained the honourable gentleman to act as his Merry Andrew, they both might be more at home, as to humour and lucre, than in that House.

Mr. *Courtenay* disclaimed any ill-nature in what he said then, or on a former night. 'Twas true, that were he reduced to the necessity of exhibiting at Bartholomew fair, he might be able to make something by discounting a joke; but he should be sorry that the honourable gentleman (Mr. *Dent*) were

obliged to live by his wit; in such circumstances he would not live long, he feared he would starve. In the changes and chances of life, it often happened that persons more elevated and secure than himself, or the honourable gentleman, were forced to pursue a mode of life as degrading as that which he recommended to him. The emigrants of France, many of them once blessed with riches and comforts, and from his heart he pited them, were at that day a case in point. The honourable gentleman therefore should not feel sore at his giving him an opportunity to be complimented by the house on his turn for humour, and on his happy temper.

Sir Robert Salisbury professed his approbation of the tax, though he was himself a sportsman.

Mr. Martin gave the minister credit for the tax, which he thought a very proper one.

Lord Sheffield said, he came down to the house two days ago to attend a Bill formed in compliance with several petitions, praying protection against the evils arising from the increase of dogs. The treatment the Bill received was unbecoming the gravity of that house. He confessed, that considering the great distress of the country on the subject of taxation, he was not sorry that the chancellor of the exchequer had seized upon the tax for the use of the public, he might however have done it with due attention to the wishes of the petitioners. The tax certainly was popular in the country, but it was with the view of getting rid of that very kind of dog, which the chancellor of the exchequer meant particularly to exempt. He entirely disagreed with those who affected to call a dog the great comfort of the poor. He knew that, on the contrary, they were the source of misfortune to them; they involved them and their children in perpetual strifes and difficulties; they were the cause of the greatest ill-will and warfare among neighbours. The poor, half-starved animal, whose existence was a misery, was the thief that plundered the petty stores of many wretched families. These poor, neglected dogs were always in the way of being bitten by mad dogs, and consequently of communicating the horrid disorder to the most unguarded of the community. The instances in his neighbourhood were innumerable. No man could be more averse than he was to give the signal to massacre those faithful animals; he therefore proposed, that the present existing dog of every poor man should be exempt from taxation; but if he thought proper to take another dog hereafter, he should pay the tax. In such a regulation there would be no outrage of a poor man's feelings, he would not be deprived of an old faithful companion, to which

he and his family were attached. The affectation of such attention to the comforts of the poor, as had been expressed, would not impose at this time. If the country is in a situation at present to indulge in such considerations, let the poor have the comfort of shoes to their feet, by diminution of the tax upon leather; let them have the comfort of light, and of cleanliness, by the reduction of the tax upon candles and soap; let them have the comfort of a little small beer, by some modification of the malt-tax. The country, however, he had too much reason to believe was not at present in a situation to forego such productive taxes on general consumption. For his part, he should prefer a general tax of five shillings upon all dogs, with an exception in favour of the poor man's existing dog, as already mentioned.

General M^r Leod liked the tax; but wished to know from the minister, whether it would produce more or less than one hundred thousand pounds, which was first calculated, now that he had relinquished his tax of one shilling on the cottager's dog.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied that this could make no difference, as it was not at first intended that this part of the tax should go to the revenue: In consequence, however, of other alterations, he was induced to think that it would produce more than was at first calculated.

Mr. Sumner wished to introduce a clause to make the tax general; that proposition was however rejected.

The house then divided on Mr. Pitt's resolution.

Ayes,

Noes,

52

29

Majority, 23

After some resolutions, the House resumed, and the report was ordered for the 28th.

QUAKERS.

Mr. Serjeant Adair brought up the Bill for relieving Quakers from imprisonment in certain cases, respecting the payment of tythes, and for admitting their evidence by affirmation in criminal and civil cases. The Bill was read a first time; and, on the motion for the second reading,

Mr. J. Hawkins Brown suggested the propriety of introducing a provision against abuses of persons, who might call themselves quakers in order to give false witness.

Mr. Serjeant Adair said, that though much would be done

for the people called Quakers by such a measure, still it could not be such as to induce any ill-disposed person to pretend himself a Quaker; and if any one were detected in such a fraud, they would be punished by the law, as it regards perjury. He then moved, that the Bill be read a second time on Monday the 2d of May, and then printed. Ordered.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, April 28.

Received several Bills from the Commons.

Read the Bills on the table. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, April 28.

Itchin bridge, Hammond's estate, Jones's divorce, and Barwick Inclosure Bills, were read a third time and passed.

DOG TAX.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the committee of Ways and Means upon the resolution proposed the preceding day by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a tax on dogs.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he thought the resolutions ought specifically to state, those kind of dogs, which the poor were suffered to keep. When the resolutions mentioned terriers and lurchers, the words used were indefinite in their meaning, and might subject the cottager to the penalty imposed on a different description of animals, if informed against by any neighbour who wished to do him a mischief.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that the resolutions were designedly drawn up in a loose manner, that they might be explained and narrowed agreeable to the suggestions of the House. The words terrier and lurcher, he conceived as definite as any other words, and in the committee the honourable gentleman might propose such alterations as he thought necessary.

The report was received, and a Bill ordered to be brought in agreeable to the resolutions voted.

HAT DUTY BILL.

The report of the committee was brought up.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, that from the construction of this Bill, the manufacturers of hats would be placed in an awkward situation.

situation. They could not sell any hats to the retail dealer without incurring the penalties of the Bill, though it was well known that the usual course of the trade was for the manufacturer to sell the hats to the dealer in an unfinished state, and the latter lined them and dressed them up for sale.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said in reply, that the hon. gentleman was in a situation by no means new to him, viz. that of objecting to one clause of a Bill, without having perused the whole; if he had read the Bill, he would have found that it contained a clause by which the manufacturer was allowed to sell hats to the dealer without the duty.

Mr. W. Smith objected to the tax, as a misnomer, it was in fact a tax on the lining of hats, and not a tax upon hats. If it was considered a tax upon the latter, how did the matter stand? Instead of imposing a duty of two shillings on each hat, it would amount to a duty of six shillings on some hats, as he understood that every lining must be stamped, though it was known that the same hats were often lined two and three times. Thus the tax would be a duty on hats to three times the amount that it professed. He said he had conversed with several persons, both retailers and others, who were of opinion, that it would be much better to stamp the hat itself, this could be done in the dye, without subjecting the impost to be evaded, which might be the case with respect to the lining.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, it frequently happened, that gentlemen who had not given themselves the trouble of carefully considering the whole of a subject, fancied they could suggest more effectual means of collecting a tax, than that proposed by a minister. This very mode suggested by the honourable gentleman had been under consideration, but it appeared, from all the information he had been able to obtain, that the plan would tend materially to injure the article and prejudice the trade in it. With respect to the other observation of the honourable gentleman, viz. that persons having their hats lined would be liable to pay the duty more than once, he conceived that to be neither a new nor an improper principle.

By the present Bill respecting the duties upon hats, persons were bound to have fresh stamps with their hats, when they were new lined; this clause therefore was rather the enforcement of an old, than the introduction of a new principle.

The report with the amendment was agreed to, and the Bill ordered to be engrossed and read a third time the next day.

NAVY BILLS.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, that "An account of all the navy, victualling, and transport bills out-standing, with the interest upon them, be laid before the House," preparatory to a motion he intended to make for the funding of navy bills. Ordered.

LANDED ESTATE BILL.

Mr. Hobart brought up the report of the Bill for granting a duty to his majesty on the succession of real estates.

Mr. Sheridan suggested a material consideration, whether this Bill might not induce people, who wished to bequeath the whole of their property, undiminished, to invest it in the French or other foreign funds?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted the question to be worthy of consideration, but said, if the practice became prevalent, it would be necessary to provide a remedy. As persons who vested property in the foreign funds were subject to the charge of a constant commission on the receipt of the interest, that together with the hazard they encountered, would prevent them from having recourse to such a measure. He would not say any more on the subject at present, as it did not press for argument or animadversion.

Mr. Sheridan reminded the right honourable gentleman that it was a known fact that several people had been and were in the habits of buying into the American funds, who, by the present Bill, would have an additional inducement to adhere to the practice.

The report was ordered to be recommitted, and the Bill to be printed with the amendment, and taken into farther consideration on that day se'nnight.

CURATES.

The order of the day, for the house resolving itself into a committee, on a Bill for allowing a certain maintenance to curates, being read,

Mr. Jodrell said, he considered the present to be a money bill. It originated in the house of lords, whereas it should have been first introduced in the commons.

The Speaker said, as far as he could state from recollection, this Bill did nothing more than extend the powers of a Bill already in force, and which originated in the House of Peers. It was merely a Bill of regulation to enable the bishops to make a distribution of property already in their possession, and did not interfere with the public purse, or trench on the privileges

leges of the House of Commons, by laying a new impost on the people.

General Smith declared he was not averse to the principle of the Bill, but he nevertheless entertained doubts, whether it did not partake of the nature and effect of a money Bill, as it went to impower the diocesan to lay a new burthen on the rector, by increasing the salary of the curate.

Mr. Sheridan said, it was better to delay the further progress of the Bill, than to lead the House into the serious mistake of suffering the other House to assume the least control over the public purse.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and *Sir William Scott* coincided with the Speaker, but agreed with the honourable gentleman, that if the least doubt remained in gentlemen's minds it should not be precipitated through the House.

The Bill was ordered to be committed to a committee of the whole House on Monday next, in order to enable the House in the interim to examine precedents.

WEST INDIES.

The order of the day was moved and read for resuming the adjourned debate on *Mr. Sheridan's* motions, relative to the production of papers concerning the West India expedition; his first motion was read, namely, "That accounts be laid before the House of the number of men sent out in the expedition under the command of *Sir Charles Grey*, at the close of the year 1793."

Mr. Secretary Dundas began a long, perspicuous, and impressive speech with declaring that to the present and some other of the right honourable gentleman's motions, he had nothing to object, to others he should propose some amendments which appeared to him highly proper and absolutely necessary. He should also move for the production of more papers on the subject than the right honourable gentleman had thought proper to include in his list, numerous as that list was. After this declaration it might reasonably be expected that he should not occupy much of the time of the House; he must, however, lay claim to their patience, while he took a review of all the circumstances connected with the subject, in which in common with the other confidential servants of the crown, he was so strongly implicated, without going through a detail of that nature, it would be impossible for him to establish, what, however presumptuous and arrogant it might seem in him to assert it, he trusted he should be able to make out to the satisfaction of the House, that no charge of neglect in respect to the care
of

of the West Indies was imputable to the executive government.

The insinuation and direct charge of a gross and unpardonable neglect, with regard to the protection of the West India colonies, had indeed been often heard unanswered within those walls, and it must frequently fall to the lot of those who fill important stations in executive government, to be obliged to preserve a mortifying silence, while random imputations were thrown on them by those, who holding no responsibility themselves, indulged every latitude of speculation, and taking advantage of posterior events, did not consider the circumstances under which the original judgment was formed. Such had frequently been his situation, but never more than in the present instance, when ministers were so openly and repeatedly accused of neglect in that part of the empire, which had, in fact, partaken so largely of their most anxious concern. The time had, however, at length arrived, when he felt himself in some degree at liberty to advert to the subject in the way that his inclination would have often led him to discuss it, had not a sense of a much higher duty, than regard to his own feelings, compelled him to be silent. He wished therefore to treat the attention of the House, and to beg their patience, as he entered into and proceeded through a circumstantial narrative of the state of those islands, and the conduct observed by this country towards them from the period of the commencement of the war. That event, it would be generally recollected, took place early in 1793, at which time the effective military force of the country did not amount quite to 17,000 men.

It was necessary that the House should all along advert to the reduced peace establishment from which the military exertions of the country arose, and the numerous and complicated interests that must necessarily have engaged the attention of government when the war commenced, in order to see that at all periods of it the exertions of the country had been proportionate to the means. Of the small force we had in the beginning of 1793, four regiments were detached to the West Indies. Two from Gibraltar, and two from Nova Scotia. The very first addition of force sent to our colonies went to those islands, and from the first appearance of hostilities, such orders were given as enabled us to recapture almost the whole of the valuable possessions of the enemy in that quarter. The war began in February, and in April or May, from the orders that had been issued, we acquired the recapture of Tobago. He did not quote this in order to boast of any very great exertions on our part, because our arrival was aided there by the general

general disposition of the inhabitants, who were eager to shake off their allegiance to the French, but in order to ~~they~~ that we neglected no opportunity of conquest. We soon afterwards received accounts of the surrender of St. Pierre and Miquelon, which though they required but small exertions; as our means were small, contributed to prove that there was no omission of advantage. He did not chuse to dwell upon other subsequent successes; but to sum up all in brief, in consequence of the orders issued, we gained at the same time an universal conquest of every possession of the enemy in the eastern part of the world. So far from being negligent, therefore, of the West Indies in the outset of the war, they were precisely the places which first obtained the notice and protection of government. When he said that, he again desired the House to recollect the limited force left upon the peace establishment, which, of necessity, caused a long time to elapse before we could recruit, arrange, and accommodate an efficient armament. During the summer of 1793, it was proposed that Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis should embark to the West Indies with 10,000 men; but that force was afterwards diminished to 6000, which, joined to the force already in Jamaica and the Leeward islands, composed 11,000 effective men. It was not necessary for him to dwell upon the events of that armament: on account of the diminution of 4000 men it could not be expected that so much should be undertaken as with a less limited force; and he expressed that sentiment to Sir C. Grey before he left this country. He mentioned this for two reasons; first, because he would not be suspected of imposing any unwarrantable task upon that gallant officer; and secondly, because that gallant officer had exceeded his most sanguine expectations; and no word or thought should ever escape him in the least derogatory to the character of that able and meritorious officer, from whatever quarter the provocation might come. He meant, therefore, explicitly to declare, that he imputed no blame whatever to him, and to have it understood that government entertained the highest sense of the great and exemplary services which he had rendered his country.

On the reasoning, however, of certain Gentlemen, it could not be denied that censure was to be inferred. If their argument was good, the conduct of that gallant officer was certainly wrong. But he (Mr. Dundas) denied both these propositions, and contended directly the inverse, that Sir Charles Grey's conduct was right, and the argument which conveyed a censure on it wrong. The event of that expedi-

tion was well known, Martinique was first taken, then St. Lucie, and lastly Gaudeloupe. After these conquests, Sir Charles Grey, had no uneasiness about retaining them. He was particular in repeating this, because on the late occasion he found it difficult to rescue his own words from cavil and misrepresentation: he now therefore meant distinctly to state, that Sir Charles Grey, in sending the four regiments which arrived in May, 1794, to St. Domingo, was governed wholly by his own discretion, and did not act from any direction, or even recommendation of government. He was far from blaming the exercise of that discretion, on the contrary he approved of it, and thought it highly serviceable; but such as it was, it was wholly in its origin, and all its consequences attributed to that officer, who by that step plainly indicated that in his opinion at that time the West India islands were really in a state of security, and free from that danger which gentlemen now pronounced so very obvious and alarming.

After the expedition had failed, it was further necessary to state to the house, that Sir Charles Grey received no intimation of intended reinforcement, but what was contained in a letter written to him, of the date of December 18, 1793, wherein he (Mr. Dundas) informed him, that he might expect one or two regiments. The reinforcements so promised in fact arrived; for two of the four regiments sent from Cork were destined for the Leeward Island service, the other two for St. Domingo; but Sir Charles Grey's commission as commander in chief, extended to Jamaica and St. Domingo as the Leeward Islands, so that he had power, if circumstances warranted it, of detaining the whole four regiments for the protection of the Leeward Islands. On the contrary, however, he sent away two regiments destined by government to that part of the West Indies, which plainly indicated the most positive opinion of its security. It was further remarkable, that at that time Sir Charles Grey meditated a new expedition against another of the enemy's settlements, (the settlement of Cayenne,) and for that purpose actually detained the 35th regiment; but thinking afterwards that his force was insufficient to promise him success, he relinquished that idea, and sent the 35th regiment to join the other three at St. Domingo.

It was intimated in the course of the former debate on this subject, that government had sent out orders, or at least a strong recommendation, to Sir Charles Grey, to dispatch the four regiments to St. Domingo. All, however, that government had done was in a letter sent from England in June,

1794, to inform him, that they had destined two of the regiments sent from Cork for the Leeward Island service, and two for St. Domingo; at the same time intimating, that if circumstances would allow of it, that it might be expedient to send the whole four there; leaving it, however, wholly to his discretion, according to the urgency of the service, either to retain them in the Leeward Islands, or send them away. The utmost that this letter could amount to was, therefore, but an intimation, leaving the result wholly where it ought to be placed, in the discretion of the commander in chief; but taking it, as asserted to be, a recommendation, or even a command, the case would not be varied; for the letter was not sent from England till June, whereas Sir Charles Grey had dispatched the four regiments to St. Domingo so early as the beginning of May; he was therefore entitled, according to the principles advanced on the other side, to consider this conduct of Sir Charles Grey as totally uninfluenced by ministers, and arising merely from his free and unbiassed judgment, acting with a local knowledge of the situation of the Islands, and the means of their defence.

On the occasion before alluded to, it had also been thrown out, that Sir Charles Grey himself had demanded a reinforcement. He certainly had expressed such a wish; but he must call the attention of the house to the period when the reinforcement was demanded: it was not till long after this period, when our attempt was to dispossess the enemy of their situation in Guadaloupe had proved ineffectual. Sir Charles's letter bore date the 11th of July, and arrived in England on the 18th of August, that the West Indies were, therefore, in a state of security so late as June, 1794, was not only clear from this narrative of facts, but was a proposition further deducible from the active and zealous character of Sir Charles Grey, who never would have thought of coming home while the islands were in any degree of danger. And this was not an abstract argument on the general character of an able and enterprising officer, it had been realized in the very case before the house. Sir Charles Grey, harassed and worn out by a campaign in a dangerous climate, as unexampled in point of fatigue as it was in success, manifested a desire and had solicited and obtained his Majesty's leave to return to England for a certain period, in order to recover his health.

Previous, however, to his taking his departure, he had thought proper to visit every island, in order personally to ascertain the degree of security they were in, and also enable him to report other circumstances concerning them with

greater accuracy and precision to government. Having completed this inspection, he was actually as far as St. Christopher's, on his return, when the unfortunate news reached him that the enemy had made good a landing, and taken possession of that part of Guadaloupe. Here then was the precise case arising from accidental events, impending danger, and the insecurity of the islands. How did Sir Charles Grey act on that occasion? Instead of proceeding to England, he went to the place from which the danger originated, and like a spirited and gallant officer, made the good of his country supersede the leave of absence he had obtained. The event of his attempts upon this occasion were indeed unsuccessful, though concerted with every possible degree of vigour, and carried into effect with the greatest courage and resolution. He meant not to dwell on the unfortunate issue. Unfortunate not only in the consequent loss of the island, but also the loss of many very gallant and meritorious officers and men.

Indeed there was no occasion for him to dwell upon the facts that attended the attempts, as the house would be in possession of Sir Charles Grey's own account of this transaction. The inference he meant to draw from this was, that beyond all doubt, while Sir Charles Grey intended to return to England, he himself conceived that the West Indies were in a state of security; nor was it till after the unfortunate event of the failure at Point au Pierre, that any application whatever had been made for reinforcements.—In August and September 1794, dispatches to that effect were delivered to government by Colonel Dundas and Colonel Coote.

They stated the necessity of a reinforcement of 6,000 men, 1,200, or 2000 of which were required with all possible expedition. Upon this application how did government act? Without the least delay, orders were sent to Gibraltar, from whence 2,300 men were dispatched, who reached the West Indies in November, the same year: and further equipments were immediately set on foot here. At the time the requisition for a reinforcement of 6000 men was made, the whole of the British forces in Great Britain amounted to no more than 17,475 men, including the sick, yet notwithstanding no exertion was omitted in order to give a complete answer to the requisition. The number of effective men was somewhat under 17,000.

Five of the best regiments were employed as marines on board the fleet, comprising

3386 men.

The garrison at Gibraltar contained

5259

A great

A great body of guards was on the Continent, to the number

of 2911

So that every species of force included there were to be deducted 11,556

The remainder were in England; and he begged the house to attend to the measures pursued under his signet.

On the 17th of August he sent 600 men.

On the 25th of August 2417

On the 4th of September 1700

On the 14th of September 4000

And on the 10th of April from Guernsey 500

Making in all 9217

So he did not lose an hour in sending out the 6000 men required. At the same time that he provided these 9217 men he provided for the service of St. Domingo also, because it hung heavy on Sir Charles Grey's mind, although he was aware he had not done enough.

On the 4th of September he sent to St. Domingo 1200 men.

On the 19th of September 1800

On the 21st of March 964

And on the 23d of May 2319

Making in all to St. Domingo 6283

So that adding the reinforcements to the Leeward Islands, of 9217

The total would be 15,500

These measures were taken immediately, and he hoped, from a fair and candid consideration of the subject, that gentlemen would allow he had made an extensive provision, and that he should be no longer accused of criminal neglect. Having put these on board the transports, and made every arrangement necessary for their embarkation, it could be hardly imagined that he should capriciously detain them. He might have given improper orders so as to occasion their delay, but after he had given orders for transports to convey them, and for convoy to escort them, when a pressing service demanded their assistance, and his whole heart and soul were engaged in the undertaking, he trusted to the candour of the house for his exculpation. The first detachment failed in October, but afterwards put back on account of contrary winds. He might entertain some unreasonable dissatisfaction upon this unfortunate delay, and he did express himself so, but when he examined the journals of

of the convoy, and found the winds so contrary that the transports could not easily proceed, he acknowledged the officer to be entitled to more credit than he had suspected. Orders were given them however to remove the moment the wind changed, when the French fleet left Brest and put to sea. This was in December, and while our own fleet, after having been cruising about the channel all the summer, endeavouring to draw the enemy out to no purpose, had returned into harbour to refit. At this time he said the French fleet came out of Brest, and blocked up our ships in their own harbour: They came out of Brest, in order to do what? Undoubtedly to intercept and capture that very convoy, and therefore orders were given not to fail with means of defence so limited. If ministers did wrong in issuing orders they were responsible for it; but he reminded the house that this transaction happened at an early period of the war, at a time too when we had a fleet in the Mediterranean and another in the West Indies.

From the two unfortunate, but unavoidable occurrences, that he had stated, viz. the fleet's putting back in consequence of adverse winds and the French fleet being at sea in December, this reinforcement was delayed for its final departure till February 1795. How then did the attention of government to the West Indies now appear? On the breaking out of the war, four regiments were directly dispatched to that quarter, while the whole military establishment did not amount to 17,000 men. Soon after this Sir Charles Grey followed with 6000 men, making the whole force in the West Indies, with what was there before, 11,000 men, at a time when our establishment did not exceed 30,000. Four other regiments were afterwards sent from Cork. And now, upon application for 6000 men, 2300 were sent directly, and that force completed by the present armament of Admiral Parker to nearly 10,000 men, a reinforcement that might reasonably be thought equal to what the most sanguine mind could have expected. Under all the varied and complicated calls to which government were obliged to attend, he left it to the candour of the House, whether this degree of attention to the West Indies, compared with the actual force of the country, was such as to be deserving of the imputation of neglect? Let it not be contended that this imputation differs from criminality. Wilful neglect in government must always constitute a crime.

This latter reinforcement, it was obvious, exceeded a good deal the application of Sir Charles Grey, though from unavoidable accident, it arrived too late in the West Indies to under-

take any considerable plan of operation in the campaign of 1795, which, combined with the almost unprecedented sickness of that sickly climate for some months before, was the occasion of our debility, and the capture of Guadaloupe, and afterwards of St. Lucia.

To the same cause also was owing the too successful insurrections at Grenada and St. Vincents; for both of these events, the capture of the former and the insurrection in the latter, were to be attributed to the same cause. If ministers were blameable for one, they were for the other, and if excuseable for either, were so for both. Let it also be recollected, that Sir Charles Grey in his application for this reinforcement of 6000 men, did not apply it wholly as necessary for the defence of the Leeward Islands. He made it with a view to offensive operations, including further the conquest of St. Domingo.

Consequently the application did not imply an insecurity in the West Indies, tantamount to the force required; and in addition to those obvious instances of ready and zealous attention on the part of government to the protection and importance of those colonies, he might add, the expedition which took place against Tobago, so early after the commencement of the war, in order to recover that island, which the circumstances of the last peace compelled us reluctantly to surrender to France. The capture of this place was certainly facilitated by the encouragement and assistance of the inhabitants, but it also was in a great measure to be attributed to the eager wishes of the government of this country to extend its protection to every part of the West Indies that had been connected with us, and as such was a strong proof of the interest and concern that we must have for those that are now in our possession. The progress of his narration next brought him to consider the late armament under General Abercrombie and Admiral Christian, which was planned after mature deliberation, and officers every way qualified, from professional ability and local knowledge were appointed for the purpose.

The whole expedition, in consequence of the plan recommended and adopted, was to consist of two distinct bodies, one of 15,000 men, and the other of 12,000, in all 27,000. So far from there having been any delay in the equipment of this immense army for so distant a service, it was, to any mind possessed of candour and a knowledge of the detail of official business, a matter of astonishment that it was so early and completely in readiness. It was in the power of gentlemen at
their

their ease in that House, to throw imputation of neglect and delay about at random; their's was neither to plan or execute the project. It was merely to cavil and object, to take advantage of what had happened, to suggest and bodebode what might; but he challenged them with manly candour to view the magnitude of such an armament, the equipment of such a body of men for distant and dangerous service, in a strange and unhealthy climate. Let them review the innumerable particulars of which it must be composed, the great diversity and complication of offices and departments that must unite in rendering it complete; the navy, ordnance, transport, and medical departments, divided and subdivided into all the interior mechanism of subordinate offices.

He wished the House in the first place to recollect the state of the army at that period. All our troops had not arrived from the Continent till towards the middle of June. There were then in all thirty-two old regiments and forty-seven new. The former, containing about 11,346 men, the latter 19,808, making a total of 31,154 men; but these were so dispersed and irregular in their combinations, that an entire new regulation was obliged to take place in the whole army. Of itself a prodigy, considering the time and manner in which it was performed, and which, as a work in contemplation, would have been deemed wholly impossible, and certainly could not have been effected, without that transcendent zeal and ability which distinguished the illustrious person, to whom his Majesty had intrusted the regulation of the army—a person no less eminent for strong and extensive faculties, than the milder virtues and graces that adorned and finished his character.

Of those regiments not one was in a state for foreign service, the men individually were capable and fit, but no one regiment was in that condition. A general alteration in the system became necessary, and from one hundred and fourteen regiments, by draughting and incorporation, they were reduced to ninety. To be able to have the most distant view of the difficulty and extent of this operation, the dispersed situation of the different corps, and the various and conflicting interests of officers arising from their contracts with government, must be taken into consideration. In this process regiments were relieved by fencibles, in Jersey, Guernsey, Ireland, and other distant parts; the corps to be incorporated, brought together; and after all this was effected, the allotted force

force was further to be equipped anew for a distant and arduous service.

With respect to the navy, this expedition not only required the equipment of a large squadron of men of war, but in addition 100,000 ton of shipping for the transport service, and that at a time when the transport board had only 40,000 at command. An immediate augmentation was therefore necessary of 60,000. At a time too when transports to such a large extent were necessary to be prepared, the commerce of the country (contrary to what generally happens during a state of war) had a most unexampled extent and prosperity; provisions, which were to be procured in order to victual them, they were become extremely dear; seamen for these transport vessels were collected with difficulty proportioned to the number of men wanted, and the large bounties given for manning the navy, as well as the flourishing state of our commerce, and the encouragement given to sailors on board trading vessels. These were some of the difficulties to be encountered in fitting such a number of transport vessels, to the amount of 60,000 tons. It was easy for gentlemen to censure, but he wished them first to pause and consider the almost impossibility of collecting such a quantity of shipping under disadvantages. If they still went on with their censures, he must say, that such a gentleman must either have a mind incapable of taking these various difficulties and details into consideration, or that he must be completely ignorant of subjects of this nature. To alleviate the difficulty which occurred in this part of the service, two extraordinary resources presented themselves, the timely arrival of the East and West India fleets; and, without having had recourse to these, it would have been absolutely impossible to carry the plan of service into execution with any regard to the commerce of the country, or the seamen that were wanted for the men of war. But even after these commercial fleets arrived, time was necessary for the unloading of their cargoes, and for transacting the requisite business at the Custom House and Treasury. These circumstances occasioned a great and unavoidable delay; and, after all, there was the want of two different winds to carry these ships from the Thames to Spithead; delays occasioned by this last circumstance repeatedly happened. Amidst all these difficulties and disadvantages, the commissioners of the transport service made unbounded exertions, and he would appeal to the candour of any unprejudiced person, if greater expedition was practicable, or greater zeal and activity in the service could have been manifested.

With regard to another department, essentially connected with the equipment of this expedition, viz. the Ordnance Office; it ought to be recollected in fairness that after three years of a war, in which both by land and sea calls on that office had been great and excessive beyond all precedent, that department was suddenly required to make the utmost exertions in a very short period of time; and unparalleled exertions they actually made. The contingent of the department was massive and ponderous, and could only be gradually collected and conveyed to the places of its destination. In their conveyance also a double wind was necessary. The one that took them from Woolwich to the Downs, would not take them from the latter place to Spithead; for that purpose a direct contrary wind was requisite. When to all these considerations were added the adequate equipment of each regiment, and the completion of the hospital ships and medical staff, some idea might be entertained of the magnitude and immensity of this expedition, which not only included the two armies of 27,000 men, but also a corps of German riflemen, 1,000 strong, and another of foreigners, employed in our army under the command of the Duke of York on the Continent, of nearly 6000. It was further to be considered that this armament was not only to take out what was necessary for itself, but also for the army in the West Indies, the Europeans and Creoles consisting of 3,000 militia and 6,000 blacks.

Complaints had been intimated in particular about the accommodations of the troops, and their continuance on board of ship an unnecessary time. As to the latter object, however he might be blamed for his plans or means of execution, he thought that it could hardly be seriously maintained, that he could have any wish or interest in keeping men unnecessarily on board ship; and as to the accommodations of the men, he could assure the House that a most particular and indefatigable attention had been paid to that object, and he appealed to every one who had ever communicated any information to him on that subject, whether he had not always received it in good part. To information of every species that could be of service to the country his doors were always open; but he was particularly thankful for any thing relating to the comfort and accommodation of soldiers, an object that could not but be near the heart endowed with the least humanity, and wishing well to its country. With respect to any correspondence that might have passed between him and the transport board, on the subject of the West India expedition,

he

he was at all times ready to lay it before the House. He had, for the purpose of facilitating that expedition, put himself in possession of every possible information, and had taken care to collect it in a mass for the benefit of his successors in the department which he had the honour to fill. A code of regulations had been framed under his direction, in consequence of that information, which would be found highly useful in the transportation of troops; and he was ready to submit them to the inspection of the House. He would confess that he was very much indebted to one gentleman (Sir Jerome Fitzpatrick) for his communications relative to the mode of preserving the health of troops on board of transports. He had conversed with that gentleman on the subject, and had found much useful stuff in his observations. In consequence, he (Sir Jerome) had, by his recommendation, been appointed Inspector-General of the army on board transports, and the benefits resulting from that appointment were considerable. To prove that no care or expence had been spared by government, in providing, in every point of view, for the accommodation of the troops, and every other matter which related to the welfare of the armament, he should beg leave to read a letter or two from the commander in chief, Sir Ralph Abercrombie. (Mr. Dundas here read the letters, dated the 27th of October and 11th of December 1795, which stated, that every necessary preparation had been made on the best and largest scale for the success of the expedition; that the hospital staff, and all the regulations for the accommodation of the men in health or sickness were most unexceptionable.)

He next thought it proper to notice what had been thrown out by the honourable gentleman opposite to him, in former debates, respecting the great want of accommodation for the troops on board the vessels which were to proceed to the West Indies from Cork. To refute any imputations of that nature, he should also read a letter from the commanding officer, General Wright, dated the 11th of November 1795. (Mr. D. also read this letter, which, in substance, contradicted the exaggerated reports which had been circulated, of the miserable situation of the troops on board the transports at Cork, and expressly mentioned, that at no period were there any forces better provided with medicines and every other comfort.)

He came at length to a point highly gratifying to his feelings, viz: the having it in his power in consequence of dispatches from the West Indies, to state to the House, that of all the transports which had sailed from this country, under admiral Christian, four only were missing; that sixty-seven had

safely arrived at Barbadoes, containing above 7000 regular troops, with artillery, &c. &c. and that although the fleet had sustained a hurricane of seven weeks, of the 7000 only the small number of 400 men were in a sickly state, who were, when the last accounts came away, recovering rapidly, and would soon be fit for action.

When, after so tempestuous a passage only 400 out of 7000 were sick, he thought it a pretty sufficient proof that every species of accommodations must have been well and amply provided. Of those who did not reach the West-Indies, but were obliged to return to port, an account yet more favourable had come to hand; in some regiments not one man was on the sick list, and no regiment had more than a few in that condition.

So anxious was he for information relative to these subjects, so congenial to his natural disposition, that on hearing the complaints urged by a right honourable gentleman early in this session, he had not only trusted to his memory, but consulted those means of information (*newspapers*) which, though irregularly, often contained accounts of what passed there. All that either his memory by this means could suggest or collect of what the honourable gentleman had said, he sent to the transport board, which had produced a correspondence that he was anxious to lay before the House, as the facts were very different from what they had been represented, and he could not but think that the honourable gentleman would have been more candid at least, if he had brought forward these charges previous to the departure of the admiral (Christian) to whom the general superintendence of the transport board was entrusted, as that officer must necessarily be better acquainted with every subject relative to that department, and in some particulars was perhaps alone capable of giving the requisite explanation.

When, therefore, every thing was fairly and candidly taken into consideration, the smallness of our military establishment, the variety and complexity of the objects that called for the attention of government, the state of the continent, the irruption of the French into Holland, an event that certainly created some alarm, England, he hoped, would never be dismayed. When all these circumstances were taken into consideration, the last charge of which government need be apprehensive was that of neglecting the West-Indies.

One expedition had been sent there, while at the same time a force was collecting for the conquest of the French East-India possessions. Another while the armament was in agitation, which

which had since been so successful against the Cape of Good Hope, and the rest of the Dutch settlements. On that important key to India (the Cape of Good Hope) which we now possessed, and of which he hoped ever should keep possession.—*(Some mark of surprise being expressed at this,—"Yes," (he said) "I hope we shall always keep it, and that no man will ever dare to give it up."*

He had taken up the time of the House so long, and had trespassed on their patience, not because he meant to resist any motion that might be in contemplation for the production of every document, or an unlimited enquiry, but from the hope that he had convinced the House that *prima facie*, there was no ground whatever for the insinuations and charges so repeatedly thrown out against government for its conduct towards the colonies; on the contrary, that even it was entitled to some degree of credit for its vigilance and exertions in that respect.

Every document that would establish that proposition, he should willingly vote for the production of, and in conformity to that determination, he should consent to some of the right honourable gentleman's motions, and even bring forward others as supplementary to them. Among the long list which the honourable gentleman had produced, there were some to which he should be obliged to propose amendments as unconnected with the end he had in view, and on many accounts injurious to the country, to be exposed unnecessarily at the present moment. He had only further to add, that he would either, as was most agreeable to the right honourable gentleman, agree to, or move his amendments to each proposition singly or collectively.

Mr. Grey said, he conceived it would have been much more regular, had the honourable gentleman laid the papers upon the table, from which information upon the subject was to be obtained, before he went into so wide a field of discussion. For his own part, as he had formerly stated, it was not his intention to have taken any share in a debate on this subject, and at present he only rose on account of the allusion that had been made to the opinion of a person whom it was his duty to respect and honour. He could wish, that before any argument was founded upon the opinion of that person, every document which was necessary to explain its nature, and the circumstances in which it was given, should be produced. It was said that Sir Charles Grey had pronounced the Leeward Islands to be in perfect security, he was however authorised by that person to say, that he had given that opinion in the confidence

dence that no force could get out of any of the ports of France, and proceed to the West-Indies, till the reinforcement that had been promised arrived. It had been fairly admitted by the honourable gentleman, that Sir Charles Grey, in detaching the regiments to Jamaica and Barbadoes, had exercised that discretion which belonged to him; he could likewise say, that in exercising this discretion, Sir Charles Grey understood that he was complying with the wishes of administration. He had applied for reinforcements, which he soon expected, and with the force which the enemy then possessed in that quarter, and in the confidence that no troops could be allowed to join them from Old France, he had pronounced the situation of the Leeward Islands to be free from apprehension. It had likewise been candidly stated by the honourable gentleman, that Sir Charles Grey would not have availed himself of the leave he had obtained to return home to repair the waste his constitution had suffered, from the severe exertions of an arduous campaign in an inhospitable climate, if he had not been convinced of the security of the islands, and this his conduct, when he was apprised of their danger, sufficiently proved. After the disaster was sustained he applied for 6000 men. 2000 of which he demanded immediately. Of the cause of the disaster he would not say any thing, certain it was, that though demanded in June, no reinforcement had arrived at the end of November. At the desire of his honoured relation, he had stated thus much, and would again repeat, as his wish, that the whole transactions might be laid before the public, that they might have sufficient information to decide upon the merits of his conduct.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he had never come down to the House with less expectation of hearing a long speech, or with less intention of making one himself; and he was never more surprised than at the manner in which the right honourable gentleman had chosen to go into the discussion of this subject. As he had wished that every document necessary to afford accurate information should be produced, in order to form the basis of the discussion, he deprecated the idea of the honourable gentleman reading official papers not regularly before the House, for the authenticity of which the honourable gentleman would have credit, and which he had used in this way, to make that impression upon the House which would resist the effect of any future consideration of the subject more regularly introduced. The honourable gentleman had perverted the usual mode of proceeding. He had gone into the papers before they were on the table, made his defence before he was accused,

and stated his exculpatory proof before his trial. If he did not, however, say something at present on what the honourable gentleman had advanced, the impression he meant to give the House would be fixed. The papers might be produced, but before they were printed, and the discussion fairly brought forward, many delays might intervene, and the honourable gentleman might refer to the present debate as a full exculpation of his conduct. It had been said that upon this subject he had spoken in a churlish manner, which indeed he did not recollect to have done, and which certainly was not usual to him.— Still, however, he must avow, that with whatever good humour he might be disposed to treat his majesty's ministers, particularly the honourable gentleman, as political characters, he wished to have no intercourse with them but across the table of the House of Commons. The honourable gentleman had, indeed, kindly invited him to communications of a more private nature, to pay a visit at the Horse Guards, where he believed a bottle of excellent wine might be met with, yet he must decline such intercourse, as it would betray a degree of political coquetry, the suspicion of which he did not wish to incur. He had, it was true, on particular occasions, that of Muir and Palmer, and another young gentleman, waited privately upon the honourable gentleman in his official capacity, and he would confess, that if he were to be upon these terms with his majesty's ministers, the right honourable gentleman would be the person with whom he would be most desirous of dealing.

He had, on a former evening, declared that he had no private communication on the subject of West-India affairs with that gallant commander of whom the honourable gentleman had spoken so highly, and if the circumstances of his political connection might be supposed to have afforded him opportunities of conversation upon the subject, he would say again, that upon such occasions he had carefully abstained from entering upon it, and he believed that person would have known his duty better than to have divulged any part of the expedition in which he had been officially engaged. As to the instructions of that officer, he had only reasoned hypothetically, not from precise information. He thought he had some right to complain of the honourable gentleman for the manner in which he came forward with this information. The honourable gentleman no doubt, had reason, when he built upon the success of his motions for the production of certain papers; he knew that the House would be better disposed to accede to any propositions from the other side of the House than from that

that which he (Mr. S.) stood. But even his readiness to afford information might be overborne by the superior influence of another quarter, nor was it the first time he had known the openness of one minister corrected by the discretion of another. His appeal to official papers, however, instead of satisfying him that ministers must be acquitted of every share of blame in the unfortunate events that had taken place, convinced him more than ever that the deepest criminality attached to their conduct. After a speech of four hours and a half, the honourable gentleman had not shaken one foundation on which he had wished to institute an inquiry. The honourable gentleman himself confessed, that though he now, from better information, acquitted the various official boards of any blame, he had originally felt considerable indignation at their conduct; how then could he be surprised that others should feel as he had done, or discover blame where he himself had thought that censure had been deserved? The question at present was, whether the honourable gentleman had succeeded in removing the dissatisfaction which it was natural should arise?

It was said that the small establishment of this country at the beginning of the war, had confined the exertions of the government. That language he never heard without alarm.—If our former peace establishment was described as scanty, miserable, and contemptible, what idea did it lead us to form of a future peace establishment. To this deplorable state, in which ministers had found themselves reduced, at the beginning of a war with France, particularly in the West-Indies, they ascribe the disasters which arose in its course. Sir Charles Grey was to have had 10,000, but set out with only 6000 troops; from his force, only limited exertions were to be expected, but the honourable gentleman admitted, in the finest language of panegyric, the greatness of the merit of Sir Charles Grey, whose success so far exceeded the most sanguine expectations that could be formed. Never had he heard the honourable gentleman celebrate the gallantry and merit of a character with greater warmth; from the fineness of the words however, he suspected they were borrowed from his honourable friend near him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer.) It was wonderful that while he was so loudly celebrated in words, that this gallant and meritorious officer was the only person that had not, by the advice of ministers, received some signal mark of royal favour. He only got fine words, instead of being rewarded with substantial deeds. Still, however, he was not without his reward, since he possessed the satisfaction of conscious worth, the admiration of his brethren in arms, and the

appro-

approbation of his grateful country. While he saw the panegyric of ministers thus confined to barren words he could lay but little stress upon their approbation.

When the troops destined for the West-Indies were dispatched under Earl Moira, the honourable gentleman discovers that the state of the country required this sacrifice, and demanded the preference of an important to a less important service. This was not the language held at the time this detachment was made. Then it was contended, he well remembered, that this detachment would not cripple the exertions in the Leeward Islands; perhaps, however, from the perusal of the official papers, the honourable gentleman's memory was now refreshed. It was said, that only a regiment or two had been promised, and that, beyond this, Sir Charles Grey had no reason to expect reinforcements: but ministers were not to be acquitted upon this miserable quibble. The quantity of reinforcement was to be measured, not by what Sir Charles Grey had thought necessary in the commencement of his career: when new conquests were achieved, the very nature of things dictated the necessity of reinforcements to maintain them.—Sir Charles did not humbly solicit new reinforcements: the brilliancy and the extensiveness of his acquisitions demanded them, in a language that could not be misunderstood; and it was the duty of ministers to have provided for what they could not fail to observe would be required. The honourable gentleman had said that he (Mr. Sheridan) had criminated Sir Charles Grey, by affirming that the detachment of troops to Jamaica and Barbadoes was improper, and hazarding the safety of the Leeward Islands. As his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) had well explained, the conduct of Sir Charles Grey on that occasion, was directed by the expectation that reinforcements sufficient for the protection of the Leeward Islands would quickly arrive, and that the French force in the West-Indies would gain no accession by reinforcements from Europe. Without these motives, and this well-grounded confidence, the conduct of Sir Charles Grey in making such a detachment would have been deserving of blame. If the attack in Gaudaloupe had been made by troops in the West-Indies, when the commander pronounced the islands in a state of safety, then the fault might have been imputed to him, but if the contrary was the case, the argument of the honourable gentleman resolved itself into a mere quibble, and the whole guilt devolved upon his majesty's ministers. Even if the sailing of the French fleet were admitted to be an event which could not be prevented, yet the disasters in the West-Indies

were imputable to ministers in another view. Not only the reinforcements did not arrive, but the troops were destitute of cloathing, and were overwhelmed with the fatigues they had encountered; and although this point he would undertake to establish beyond a doubt, yet would no inquiry be granted.

The state of England again was urged as a reason why reinforcements were not sent, and one fault was defended by the avowal of another. In August 1794, the news arrived, of the disaster which befel Guadaloupe, accompanied with an urgent requisition for six thousand men. How this disaster was occasioned, the right honourable gentleman did not descend to inquire. If he would permit inquiry to be instituted, it would be found that it was owing to a want of troops, and to a want of necessaries for the troops which were there. The demand, however, met ministers wholly unprepared. There were only 17,000 troops in the kingdom, and of these 3,000 were destined for the marine service. He desired to know how the marine service came to have been previously neglected? This was merely shifting the vulnerable part. Out of these, however, 9,000 were ordered for the West Indies. What hindered their sailing? It blew a contrary wind, and the French fleet, it was said, popped out of Brest as soon as our grand fleet put into port to refit. Why were not the reinforcements sent out in detachments, as had been advised by Sir Charles Grey? Or was it to be sustained as an excuse for the delay, that we had not a fleet which could meet the French fleet at sea. As well might it be said, that if the French should be so mean as to take such an occasion against a gallant enemy, as to land an army on the coast of Ireland when our fleet was in port, that no blame would be imputable to the executive government. As to the accommodation on board the transports, he would give the honourable gentleman credit for his humanity, and his concern for the health of troops; and if there was any neglect in this department, he did not believe that it was personally imputable to him; but he insisted that the fact was as he had represented, and that every day immense numbers were thrown overboard, who died of sickness and disease, occasioned by neglect, and the want of proper arrangements for preserving the health of the men while on board the transports. If this was the case, surely blame was imputable to some person. On whom this blame attached would be found on inquiry. In spring, 1795, the islands were in imminent danger; requisitions were made for reinforcements, and it was resolved to remedy every thing, but the remedy could not be found. There were only 31,000 regular troops

in England. The French had taken Holland, and in such a situation it would not have been safe for the country to have sent a large force on foreign service. Mr. Sheridan said, he could not but remark a strange contradiction in their argument. Some time ago, when the militia and fencible corps were greatly increased, it was represented, that this force would be sufficient for the internal defence of the country, and that it would enable us to apply our regular army to foreign service. Both propositions, however, could not be true. Either part of these 31,000 troops might have been spared for the West Indies, or militia and fencible regiments were insufficient for the purpose for which they were raised. Even in this emergency, an expedition was sent to the Cape of Good Hope, the blame of which the honourable gentleman, with a sort of monopolizing magnanimity, was pleased to challenge to himself. We have got, says he, the key to the East Indies, and please God we shall keep it. This was certainly very comfortable news to the Stadtholder, but said the honourable gentleman, the Stadtholder was not strong enough to hold it, but please God we shall take care of it for him. This, in his opinion, amounted to a declaration that ministers never wish to see what was called the regular government of Holland re-established, and that they are quite pleased with the system of republican anarchy, which at present prevails in that country. A scheme was at last formed for sending 27,000 men out to the West Indies. The difficulty was how they were to be procured. With regard to this point the honourable gentleman had adopted the most disgraceful mode of defence that had ever been attempted before a British House of Commons. There was conveyed according to his account a mighty army upon paper, but when it came to be reviewed, it was found to be good for nothing. When members came forward to parliament, with an account of the army expenses, they represented it as a more splendid establishment than any of which Louis the fourteenth could ever boast. When a requisition was however made upon it to furnish men for actual service, it was found to be composed of trash unfit to be trusted on any expedition. He had by accident seen this motley assembly reviewed at Southampton, and such a pitiful set of wretches he never beheld. They consisted of children and enfeebled old men, with a parcel of boys at their head. Such was the consequence of converting the army into a jobbing scene, and a means of interest and connections. Was it, he begged to ask, no blame to have an army thus constituted, was it no guilt to delude the Country with such mockeries, such unsubstantial

defence? The remedial operation which was adopted was to bring forward the Duke of York, as the retriever of the British army, and the restorer of its discipline. The honourable gentleman was also extremely, and very justly, liberal of his encomiums upon his royal highness; nor was he very abstemious in his claims of merit for himself. Before his plan could be put in execution, an immense number of tremendous difficulties were to be conquered. The regiments were to be reduced, and marched from one end of the kingdom to the other, in order to be drafted, and a rendezvous was to be held at Southampton for a general review previous to their embarkation. The ordnance service could not be provided, on account of the limited scale of operation admitted by the foundery at Woolwich. Transports could not be provided on account of our increased and increasing trade, and double winds, (a curious phrase) were requisite to convey the ordnance stores from Woolwich to Spithead. In fine, the expedition had always difficulties to encounter, and unfortunately the difficulties always got the better of it, and incredible disgraces had uniformly been the fruit of incredible exertions. What, he asked, would have been said in the days of the late Earl of Chatham, if he had adduced such apologies for the failure of an important expedition. He reminded the honourable gentleman, that incapacity, as well as neglect, was criminal in those, who obtruded themselves into high situations for which they were not fit. Not a week before the tenth of November, Admiral Jervis sailed with a wind which would have carried the whole expedition to the West Indies. But it seems it could not be got ready till the twenty-seventh of November, the consequence of which was all those accumulated disasters, which ruined the fleet, and defeated the enterprise. If ministers were permitted to proceed upon such principles of blundering incapacity, they might give up the contest with France altogether. The expeditions of the French are conducted in a very different manner, and this country has known a time when such proceedings would not have been tolerated. Such a man as Lord Chatham would have taken the foundery from Woolwich, and wheeled the ordnance to a different quarter of the kingdom, rather than have allowed the inconvenience of the situation to have thwarted a favourite scheme. Mr. Sheridan concluded with declaring it to be his intention to persist in his motion, if the papers were granted, to move for an inquiry; and if the inquiry was agreed to, to follow it up by a resolution, expressing the strongest censure of the conduct of his majesty's ministers.

Mr.

Mr. Fox said he did not mean to go into the general argument, but he must make a few observations upon what had been said by the right honourable gentleman that night, as to the opinion of Sir Charles Grey. He could have wished that when the right honourable gentleman was speaking of the opinion of that gallant officer, he had referred to the various grounds on which Sir Charles formed his opinion. The right honourable gentleman had referred to the letter of the twenty-fourth of May. So far was he from referring on a former occasion, that he stated the reverse of relying on any such thing as a general argument in favour of the conduct of his Majesty's ministers with regard to the West India expedition. How could he have said any thing from that letter, since on his word and honour he never heard of it until he came to the House that day. He had said he had no information of Sir Charles Grey's opinion, nor of the correspondence between him and the government. He said then, and he said now, he was wholly ignorant of that correspondence. He said then, however, it was unfair (and he thought so still) to give Sir Charles Grey's opinion on the subject without the papers and documents to that opinion, and which alone could enable the House to form a judgment of the matter which made the foundation. This he complained of then, and complained of now, and until he should see all the papers he should continue to complain of; because notwithstanding the compliment which the right honourable gentleman had paid Sir Charles Grey, who, he admitted, deserved all the handsome things that had been said of him, yet it was unfair to quote his opinion without possessing the materials on which he formed that opinion. Indeed, if the expression was not an exceptionable one, he would say that the ministers ought not to shelter themselves, as they attempted to do, under the opinion of Sir Charles Grey. It could never be fair to do that without bringing forward the materials on which the opinion of Sir Charles Grey was founded. Great as he was ready to allow the authority of Sir Charles Grey to be, no man's authority could be so great that it could not be necessary to examine the grounds of his opinion. If this was true, as it certainly was, upon general reasoning, how much more necessary was it in this particular instance, after what the House had heard that day? How much more necessary was it to inquire into the ground of the opinion of Sir Charles Grey, upon the subject of the West India expedition, after the House had heard what had been said by his honourable friend (Mr. Grey). It appeared, by the communication of his honourable friend to-day, that

that the force which went out from France, of which Sir Charles Grey had no knowledge, nor could have any when he wrote the letter alluded to by the right honourable gentleman, but of which the executive government of this country might at least have some knowledge, and therefore the grounds of forming an opinion on the state of the West India Islands, was very different with Sir Charles Grey and his Majesty's ministers, at the time this letter was written by Sir Charles Grey, and that constituted the difference to be made between the opinion which Sir Charles Grey had expressed, and the opinion which his Majesty's ministers ought to have formed. Having said this, he had said all with which he had to trouble the House with upon this part of the subject. He had only to add, that he conceived the more they considered this business, the more they would see the necessity of entering into an inquiry upon it; and the House should not be carried away by the opinion of Sir Charles Grey. Before they suffered themselves to be guided by that, they ought to have before them the ground upon which that able and gallant officer formed that opinion.

Mr. *Sheridan's* motion—

“That an account be laid before the House of the number of men destined for the expedition to the West Indies, under Sir C. Grey, at the close of the year 1793,” was then put and carried,

He then moved,

“That an account be laid before the House of the number of men withdrawn from that service, in order to form an expedition to the coast of France, under Lord Moira;” which, after an amendment confining it to certain dates and specifications, was agreed to.

The next motion—

“An account of the number of men, who after the conquest of Martinique, St. Lucie, and Guadaloupe, were detached to St. Domingo, by Sir Charles Grey, in obedience to orders from home,” was put and carried.

The fourth motion—

“That the different applications made by the several commanders in chief for reinforcements, since the appointment of Sir R. Abercrombie, be laid before this House, or such parts of the same as can with safety be communicated,” was withdrawn, on the undertaking of Mr. Secretary Dundas to give all the information in his power upon that head.

The fifth—

“That returns be laid before the House of the several reinforcements

"inforcements which actually arrived in the West Indies during that period, specifying the distribution of the force, and the dates when they arrived," being amended by confining it to dates, &c. was agreed to.

Mr. Sheridan then moved for an account of the appointment of Sir John Borlase Warren to the expedition to Quiberon, and also of that of General Doyle, together with an account of the regiments serving under him. Mr. Sheridan observed that the right honourable gentleman, in the course of his speech to-night, never made an allusion to the expedition to Quiberon; he was very wise to avoid it. He (Mr. Sheridan) also omitted that expedition in his speech, which was a foolish thing for him to do. This expedition certainly to a certain degree impeded the West India expedition, and was therefore proper to be laid before the House when the West India expedition was to be discussed.

The question being put,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* objected to this motion, because the appointment of Sir John Borlase Warren to this expedition had no connexion with the West Indies. He objected to it also, because the appointment of General Doyle had no connexion with the West Indies. The West India expedition was large enough to demand a discussion of itself, and there was no occasion to mix any thing else with the consideration of it. He had on a former occasion given notice that he should oppose any enquiry into the expedition to Quiberon. He should assign his reasons for that opposition when the subject of that expedition came to be discussed. At all events it should be discussed separately, and that was reason enough against going into it to-night.

General Tarleton said that there was a close connexion between the question of the expedition to Quiberon and the expedition to the West Indies, for that in reality four of the best of the regiments that ought to have been sent to the West Indies were sent to Quiberon.

Mr. Sheridan insisted, that the detachments which formed the expedition of General Doyle, had been previously destined to proceed to the West Indies; he thence contended, that this motion was connected with the West India business.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that before the hon. gentleman could establish that point, it was necessary to go into the policy or impolicy of the expedition, which inquiry could not be complied with.

The motion was then negatived without a division.

Mr. Sheridan moved for extracts of all the letters from
Admiral

Admiral Christian and General Abercrombie, respecting the delay of the expedition in sailing, from the date of their appointments.

Mr. Dundas objected to this motion, on the ground, that the letters contained such official matters as could not be made public.

Mr. Sheridan wished for extracts without the parts which were mixed with state secrets.

Mr. Dundas said that was impossible.

Mr. Fox said that a delay of considerable extent had taken place, and he hoped that if the right honourable gentleman would not comply with the words of this motion, he would have the goodness to point out some other mode by which some information might be laid before the House in this particular.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, if the right honourable gentleman who had just spoken, had attended to the whole of the speech of his honourable friend (Mr. Dundas) he would have found he had alledged reasons against this motion. He had stated in general reasoning the ground for maintaining that there was no culpable delay on the part of the executive government. He had stated the particular cases of the delay which had taken place, to shew that it was unavoidable—of the strength of that reasoning the House would judge. His honourable friend had said he would bring evidence in support of what he had said upon that subject. When he came with his documents, the House would consider of the matter, and determine upon its merits.

Mr. Fox said he learnt from the speech of the right honourable gentleman himself (Mr. Dundas) that there was ground of blame in this part of the case at one period, even in his own opinion. That right honourable gentleman had, however, said that he had been since convinced and satisfied upon that subject, whence he would have it, that because he was satisfied, the House ought to be satisfied also. This was arriving at a conclusion a little too rapidly. It was a little increase on all the confidence which that House had from time to time been pleased to place in his Majesty's ministers. Of what use was the inquisitorial power of the House of Commons, if the satisfaction of the King's minister was to put an end to all necessity for the House to institute any inquiry into any subject, whatever suspicious appearances it might bear?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said again, that the right honourable gentleman did not hear the speech of his honourable friend. He had not said that the House ought to be convinced, he had only alledged that he was convinced himself, and

App
and
so c
wh
M
man
tion,
which
had fi
made
transp
had b
they h
couple
two th
cannot
that w
the cas
than th
off bla
to them
satisfie
satisfie
Gen
a judgm
the mo
was no
there w
The
Mr.
" T
" ber o
" lost o
" Aber
Mr.
are four
or whet
captured
names o
he migh
him.
The c
Mr. S
able gent
composed
the force
VOL.

and that he would lay before the House the reason why he was so convinced, in order that the House might judge of it, which he had done.

Mr. Grey said, the speech of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Dundas) proved that he himself felt some indignation, that he expressed some warmth at some part of the delay which this motion was aimed to explain, but that, forsooth, he had since been satisfied. The right honourable gentleman had made the *amende honorable* to the board of ordnance and the transport board, by saying, that although he thought they had been guilty of some delay, upon better inquiry he found they had been diligent. This sort of general reasoning, when coupled with the events which had happened, proved one of two things : either that we are overpowered as a nation, and cannot proceed to defend ourselves against our enemies, or that we have inefficient councils. The latter, he hoped, was the case. He hoped there was no other reason for our disasters than the incapacity of our ministers, who endeavoured to shift off blame from time to time as it was imputed and imputable to them. The right honourable gentleman talked of his being satisfied. The House ought not to inquire whether he was satisfied, but to satisfy themselves.

General Smith asked how it was possible for the House to form a judgment upon this subject without the information which the motion before them tended to seek for ? He believed there was not one intelligent man in this nation who had not think there was a very shameful delay in this expedition.

The motion was then put and negatived.

Mr. Sheridan then moved,

“ That there be laid before the House a return of the number of ships foundered or missing, and the number of men lost or missing, belonging to the expedition under General Abercrombie.”

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, that the ships which are missing are four in number, but it was impossible to know how many, or whether any of them were foundered, or whether they were captured. If the honourable gentleman wished to have the names of the ships which did not arrive at Barbadoes, that he might have, but other information could not be given to him.

The question was then put and negatived.

Mr. Sheridan wished to know whether the right honourable gentleman meant to state that the expedition to Quiberon composed part of the expedition to the West Indies ; whether the force should be sent to the West Indies in the aggregate,

as ministers contended, or as he contended, should have been sent in detachments? Was Lord Moira to go to the West Indies? He should, in order to explain this, move,

"That there be laid before the House a return of the General and Staff Officers belonging to the regiments in England, serving under Lord Moira, in the years 1794 and 1795."

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* undertaking to give the substance of this information in another form, the motion was withdrawn.

Mr. *Sheridan* then moved,

"That there be laid before the House a copy of the instructions given to Sir John Borlase Warren, relative to the expedition to Quiberon in June and July, 1795."

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* opposed it on the general ground which he had stated already, that the expedition to Quiberon had no connection with that to the West Indies, and that they should be made the subject of separate discussions.

Mr. *Sheridan* maintained that they were connected, for that the troops which were sent to Quiberon and Isle Dieu, ought to have been sent to the West Indies.

Mr. *Fox* also applied this to the general question of the West-India expedition, the blame resting with ministers that these troops were not sent to the West Indies.

Mr. *M. Robinson* and *General Tarleton* supported the motion, which was then put and negatived.

Mr. *Sheridan* then moved,

"That there be laid before the House an account of the number of men who died on board transports at Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, or in ports of Great-Britain or Ireland, destined for the West Indies, in the years 1794 and 1795."

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* opposed this motion. The account could not be given accurately; besides, if it could, it would only be a melancholy picture, the examination of which could produce no good.

General Smith thought this answer a very extraordinary one, and supported the motion.

Mr. *Fox* enforced the propriety of ministers assigning better reasons for refusing information to the House, than they had done in the discussion of this business.

The motion was put and negatived.

Mr. *Sheridan* moved, for

"Copies or extracts of letters or memorials on this subject from the officers, commanding the troops on board the said

"want."

" transports, from the Mayor of Plymouth, or from Lord George Lennox, governor of Plymouth garrison."

Mr. *W. Smith* thought this a very important matter, indeed. It was the privilege and the incumbent duty of that House to inquire into the expenditure of public money. This they all allowed. But he wished to see them inquire into the expenditure (if he could be allowed the expression) of human life. He wished the House of Commons to make some inquiry into the loss of the lives of our fellow-creatures. If this sort of information was to be refused to that House, and therefore the public at large were to be kept in the dark about it, he must confess that would appear to him a very extraordinary proceeding. The House of Commons were to inquire into accounts of sums of money as a matter not of right only, but of duty also; but into the loss of the lives of our fellow-creatures no inquiry was to be allowed. So that the principle amounted to this; the lives of our fellow beings were of less value, in the opinion of that House, than our property. He owned he had other notions; he thought that the legislature of a country ought to enquire a little into the expenditure of human life.

The motion was then put and negatived.

The remainder of Mr. Sheridan's motions were all agreed to, excepting that for laying before the House the correspondence of the ordnance and transport board, which, after a short conversation, was negatived.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* then moved for a long list of letters, of different dates, in 1794, and 1795, from Sir Charles Grey, Sir John Jarvis, General Williamson, and other naval and military commanders in the West Indies. Ordered.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, April 29.

Heard counsel on an appeal; read the Bills on the table; received others from the Commons, which were read a first time; and then adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, April 29.

A message was delivered from the House of Lords, stating that their lordships had agreed to a great number of private Bills.

The

The Loan Bill was read a third time and passed.

The Order of the Day for the report on the Bill for regulating the sale of hay and straw, being read,

Mr. *Alderman Lushington* proposed a clause to the effect, that the venders of hay and straw may be entitled to the same privileges of action, in case they were sold an unmarketable commodity by the farmer, in the same manner as persons who purchase from the salesmen, in a similar case.

After a short conversation between Mr. *Mainwaring*, Mr. *Baker*, *Serjeant Adair*, and Mr. *Hussey*, it was agreed to recommit the Bill, and adjourn the further consideration of it to Monday.

LONGITUDE.

The House resolved itself into a committee to consider of a certain sum to be granted to the Board of Longitude, Sir Philip Stephens in the Chair.

Mr. *Rose* moved that a sum not exceeding 5000l. be granted to the board of longitude.

Mr. *Hussey* wished before such a sum was voted, to know if the board, after the repeated sums granted, were yet nearer the object?

Mr. *Rose* said, it had been usual to vote such a sum for this purpose, and it had tended to promote valuable discoveries.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, if the honourable gentleman asked the question gravely, and not with an air of pleasantry, he would answer, that the improvement made in science, since the board was established infinitely more than counterbalanced the money expended. Our commerce and the world were indebted to the scientific discoveries that had been made, which was a matter of serious advantage to us as a nation, and by no means a subject of levity or pleasantry.

Mr. *Hussey* replied, that in the discussions in that House he never was accustomed to deal in pleasantry; he was serious in the question which he put to the honourable gentleman. The house granted annually 5000l. for the discovery of the longitude, and he gravely inquired whether we were nearer the object, or what were the advantages derived?

Captain Berkeley said that very valuable discoveries had been made of late, and no doubt this sum would stimulate the exertions of scientific men. He mentioned the instance of Harris's time-piece, which came nearer to the discovery of the longitude than any thing yet invented, and for which that gentleman had been rewarded with 10,000l.

Mr.

Mr. *Francis* said, he doubted the value of that discovery, and really wished to know whether we had approximated to the discovery of the longitude.

After a short conversation, the vote passed the committee.—The House was resumed, and the report ordered to be received on Monday.

GAME LAWS.

The order of the day being read for the second reading of the game Bill.

Mr. *Curwen* said, when he had first moved for leave to bring in the Bill, it was his intention only to have it printed and left on the table, that gentlemen might have an opportunity to consult the clause, and be prepared at the commencement of next session, to support or disapprove of the measure. It was his anxious desire to obtain the opinion of the country gentlemen; in consequence however of what had occurred on a former night, he found his honour in some manner implicated, he was, therefore, desirous of discussing the subject and explaining his objects in the present stage of the business.—As the Bill embraced many objects, and as it was prepared in a hurry, he was aware it required some amendment; but the general and leading principle, he conceived no gentleman would dispute, viz. that of every land-holder having the privilege of killing game on his own ground. This would, in a great degree, prevent the practice of poaching, which led to the commission of greater crimes, and be, at the same time, the best method that could be devised of preserving the game. Some inaccuracies in the Bill would doubtless be corrected in the committee; as the poor man had a right to the game on his ground, he was of opinion, that he should be suffered to protect it as he was enabled to do in respect to other property; gentlemen were aware that if the poor man was to involve himself in law, by bringing an action against a rich one, the poor man's ruin would ultimately follow. The leading principle of the Bill was, to give every man an unqualified right to kill game on his own ground, a principle founded in justice, and such, as in every other case, the legislature recognized as just and proper; he would therefore move, that the Bill be now read a second time, and if any arguments were urged in opposition to it, he would afterwards take the liberty of making a reply.

Captain *Berkeley* said, that when a Bill was proposed to abolish the whole system of the existing game laws, he expected at least that it would have contained something on which the propriety of such a measure could be fairly discussed.

When

When he heard on a former occasion the honourable gentleman speak of the oppressive nature of the game laws, he suspected that the Bill would have introduced some great innovation, though he now found that in many things the Bill was perfectly innocent. The essence of it seemed to be comprehended in the clause that allowed land-holders to kill game on their own grounds; and that was followed by a clause which would destroy the whole, as it would arm every cottager, who had a cabbage garden of half a rood, with a right to pursue game into gentlemen's grounds, on pretence that he had started the game on his own premises. This would occasion the utmost confusion, by taking away the privileges of landed property, and reducing all distinctions that usually resulted from it. Every clause contained matter that was exceptionable, and some of them what appeared to him to be nonsense. One clause reserved the right of the lords of the manor, &c. but while the Bill extended the privilege of killing game to every landholder, and allowed him to pursue game where he thought proper, after he had started it, he did not think that the lord of the manor would find any account in having a game-keeper for the protection of his game, or that he would at all be able to preserve it. Another clause allowed any person to stop those whom they found carrying a gun for the destruction of game between sun-set and sun-rise, and to take the gun from him. This was followed by a clause, that provided, if any resistance was made, the person attempting to apprehend the person transgressing should be entitled to repel force by force, should he meet with resistance, and even to maim, kill, &c. A clause followed which indicated that it was framed rather for the West of the Isle of Man. It was that the person who thought himself aggrieved by being thus hurt, maimed or killed, should be allowed to seek redress at the quarter sessions, which will no doubt create no small astonishment, should a person of the last description appear and seek redress. In short, he appealed to the House, whether the Bill was such as could be sent to a committee, and he would therefore move, "That it be read a second time this day three months."

Sir Richard Sutton thought that much contention among individuals, and great destruction to the game, would arise from a permission to every land-holder to kill game on his own grounds, and to pursue it after it was started. A hare and partridge was as much property as any other species of property that a man possessed. Farms were so intermixed in the country, that the Bill would be productive of endless broils, and if game was suffered to be sold without any restriction,

tion,

tion, it would soon be destroyed, as every hedge would have snares and nets to entrap partridges and hares, and it would be impossible for a man to pursue game without danger of exposing himself to a law-suit, to ascertain to whom the game he followed belonged. In Germany, he said, there were three classes of game, subject to particular regulations.—He never heard of arrangements like those proposed, existing in any other country. In these times of democratical doctrines, he did not hesitate to utter the aristocratical opinion that the game laws of this country were founded on good principles, and secured to the landed proprietors that superiority of privilege and of enjoyment which they could best exercise without injuring themselves, or interfering with any other pursuits. This likewise afforded to a country gentleman an inducement to live in the country, which he considered as no mean object. On a former occasion it had been stated on the opposite side of the House, that it would be of general benefit not to restrain the pleasures of the country, for the purpose of attaching country gentlemen to their estates. This Bill would deprive them of a principal pleasure, and certainly game should be protected for their use, as from their habits of life the community did not suffer by the time they occupied in sporting. He wished, however, that game should be brought openly to market, and exposed to sale. It was well known that rich merchants and citizens, who had no game of their own, were extremely desirous of this luxury, and they fell upon means of obtaining it. He was of opinion that those who were properly qualified, should be at liberty to sell what they killed, and in this way the market would be supplied. With regard to the poacher he would shew him no mercy. He would increase the penalties to which the offence was liable, and put a stop to a violation of the law that led to such pernicious consequences.

Mr. *Buxton* said that a Bill might possibly contain some things liable to exception; but to its general tendency he was favourable. He deprecated the idea of equality, as much as the honourable gentleman who spoke last, every man in the community however, had an indubitable right to the full enjoyment of his rights and property. God forbid! he said, that the House should in any instance assimilate the German laws to the laws of Great-Britain. In proportion as the poor were interested in the game, so far would they be interested in its protection, and if all land-holders had a right to kill game, the market would be better supplied. With regard
to

to the latter part of the Bill, Mr. Buxton said he approved it heartily; nor did he think it liable to the ridicule thrown upon it. If people came at night to kill game, some means should be taken to prevent them from disturbing their neighbours by pursuing game at improper hours.

Mr. Fox said that he was a very warm friend to the principle of this measure, though some of the clauses of the Bill might be thought exceptionable. He wished to abstain from general arguments, he hoped however the House would consider, what the honourable gentleman had advanced with regard to the German laws, as totally inapplicable to the question. What was there in the British code to resemble in the least the laws of Germany? He was surprised to hear any thing like the introduction of them into this kingdom. The arguments, however, of the honourable baronet as far as they were right, most assuredly went to the fundamental repeal of the game laws. He said, that in Germany, and he recommended the same regulation to be adopted here, game could be brought and sold at the public market by those who were qualified.—How then does the matter stand? The lord of the manor may employ a game-keeper to kill his game; but the lord of the manor must sell it. He was firmly persuaded, that to give the land-holder his just right over the game on the grounds which he occupied, would be the best means of preserving the game. The land-holder had an indisputable right to the game on his ground, and much more so assuredly, than the man who obtains a fictitious right to kill game, by taking out his qualification. With regard to poaching, he confessed he was no friend to it, but he would not go so far as the worthy baronet, and say, that he would have no mercy for poachers. If the worthy baronet entertained such an idea of the criminality of a poacher, a person whose situation might be some alleviation of his guilt, in what view did he consider those who employed him, and prompted him to commit the offence, whilst their condition must render any breach of morality still more inexcusable? He did not by any means wish to justify the poacher, but while they had instances of corruption and misconduct before them in persons of a higher rank, and even recorded in the journals of that House, were it regular to refer to these points, they ought to consider it as less extraordinary if people of inferior circumstances should sometimes be betrayed into violations of the law. If the worthy baronet felt indignation at the conduct of poachers, he could not think the rich tradesman, who tempted him, a very honourable character. The principle of this Bill was to abolish the existing laws upon this subject,

subject, and with that purpose he perfectly concurred. And why? because game is at this time sold, and the law which prohibits it's sale is ineffectual. If there was any principle of legislation on which no doubt could be entertained, it was this, that there should be no law which was constantly and uniformly violated. All laws were indeed occasionally broken, but it was the degree of infringement that was to be considered. Put upon the choice of evils, either the repeal or the existing code without substitution, or its continuance without amendment; he would prefer the former for the very reason he had stated.

Another principle of the Bill was to make game private property. The worthy baronet says, that the little proprietors would destroy all, but the property would either be of such value as to prevent them from sacrificing the future to a present advantage, or that dependance and connection which subsists between the great and the small proprietor. The interest which the latter feels on many occasions in making himself a favourite with the former, would deter him from acting in any way that would render him obnoxious. With regard to the pursuing of game started upon their own property, this he considered to be the most dubious point in the Bill. The clause which had been considered as very exceptionable, that which provided the redress for those who were aggrieved by any conduct founded on the provisions of the Bill, was a common language, and did not involve that absurdity which had been ridiculed. He thought the preservation of the game of importance, though he might not think it of so much importance as others did, nor was he sure that it had the effect to make country gentlemen reside among their tenants; it was nevertheless an object. He would ask, however, of those who were acquainted with that county (Norfolk) where game was perhaps better preserved than in any other part of England, whether it was not owing to the power which the tenant had of turning off from his lands those who attempted to kill game without his consent, that the game was so well preserved, and would it not be still better preserved, if by giving him liberty to kill game, the landholder had an interest in its protection? Those who formerly spoke in favour of this measure were gentlemen fond of the sport, while those who opposed it confessed that they had little predilection for the diversion. The former were surely best qualified to determine what would tend most to the destruction or the preservation of game. In the present code every species of absurd principle was to be found, and it was not to be wondered at, if precedent had sometime been disgracefully borrowed. The

great principles of the Bill were the repeal of the old law, and making game private property. As to the latter it was the true that some difficulties might arise, but the adjustment of such difficulties was mere matter of detail, and did not affect the principle. If game was made saleable, it then became property. The principal of bestowing on a particular class the privilege of making a trade of selling game, was perfectly anomalous in this and in every other country. If the lord of the manor had a right to sell, any other person might have that right. It was indeed a matter of important regulation to determine to whom game precisely belonged, if it was made property and saleable. He could have wished the subject to have lain over a session, to give room for mature deliberation; he would, however, cheerfully vote for the bill going to a committee, to testify the complete approbation which he entertained of its principle.

Sir Richard Sutton rose to explain, but entering upon extraneous matter, he called to order from the chair.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he did not mean to detain the house at any length on the present subject. A considerable difference of opinion seemed to prevail both with respect to the principle of the Bill, and the means by which its provisions should be enforced. The preservation of game seemed generally to be admitted on a real and solid ground of policy; and, for his own part, he considered it in a more serious point of view, and pregnant with more beneficial effects than it appeared to be considered by some gentlemen, especially in its tendency to induce gentlemen to live in the country, where the hunting and killing of game afforded them an innocent amusement. It might therefore be laid down as a principle, that the preservation of game should be maintained, not by means oppressive and arbitrary, but by some regulation coercive and efficient. In viewing the degrees of right to kill game, as enjoyed by different orders of men in society, it was not from partiality, but from reason and reflection that he would allow that privilege in a superior degree to the higher orders of the state. It was an amusement better suited to their situation and habits in life than to others, and their gratification claimed, he thought, the first attention. The second class, to whom a participation of this right might properly be given, were the occupiers of land, though in a more limited degree, and only on their own grounds; lest, by too liberal an indulgence in this amusement, they might be diverted from more serious and useful occupations. They ought to enjoy this privilege however merely as an amusement, and by no means

means on the notion of property. He wished gentlemen to consider what property distinctly and clearly was—Was it not clearly the creature of law and subject to legal modification? The right to any thing of this sort in civilized society was clearly not *natura*, but the effect of law. Game surely must have the same distribution as other transferable things; though the law gave the farmer a profit in the ground under a lease, yet it granted him the right only of deriving from it such advantages as the labours of agriculture might fairly produce. This was not the law of England only, but of almost all countries.

The farmer did not enjoy that right or any general principle of property, but he only enjoyed it in a certain limited degree for relaxation and amusement, and as some encouragement to preserve the game, in the use and enjoyment of which he should participate to a certain extent. With respect to another class of men, those qualified for the sport, there would, he believed, be no difference of opinion. Among other principles of the Bill, however, there was one which went to enable such persons to avail themselves of this privilege: Was not this enabling them to poach and trespass on the lands of the proprietor, and giving them an opportunity of pursuing the sports of the field, not as an amusement, but as a livelihood? Such a law, in his opinion, would hold out an act of indemnity to poachers, who for their own sake, and for the sake of society, should not be encouraged to taste of such diversions. Upon this, however, he would not dwell. The attempt to make game property, was not, in his opinion, very likely to tend to its preservation; on the contrary, it would encourage the lawless profession of poachers, and excite their ingenuity to multiply their destructive arts in killing game. If it was to be made saleable, the poacher would be better able to supply the market, than persons whom the law or the proprietors of game might permit or employ to kill it. The selling and carriage of game, though prohibited, is nevertheless daily practised and if they were to make it free to be brought to market, in proportion to the increase of sale, would be the increase of its destruction. The poacher can procure it cheaper having made it a study and a trade; he would consequently undersell the occupier of the land, or any other privileged person. The farmer, also, if let into the amusement of killing game and converting to his own use, would, without very forcible restrictions, be tempted to consume his time, by attempting to make a lucrative employment of that which was granted only as a limited amusement; upon the whole, there-

fore, he would advise the business to be put off, for more mature examination, or that some other system should be proposed, more likely to accomplish the object of the present Bill.

Mr. *Francis* said, he was of opinion, that every possible encouragement should be given for the preservation of game. But he was also of opinion, that the moment the law gave the property of land to the tenant, the same moment it gave him a property in the game fed on that land. They might as well take away all his corn, and the produce of his industry, which is fairly his property, as to allow birds and other creatures to come and devour it, without his having the permission to destroy them. He could by no means agree with the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) in thinking that the greater the quantity of game killed, the less would be the quantity of game on the whole. The contrary, in his opinion, would be the case; if the farmer enjoyed the privilege of shooting and consuming game, he would feel an anxiety to take care of the eggs, and to promote the propagation of game, which in the present system, from his indignation at the treatment he receives, he is rather tempted to exterminate. Mr. *Francis* readily agreed that game might be made lawfully saleable: nor did he see any difference between the man who kills it, and the citizen who is supplied with it, only that the country gentleman was more eager to kill it, and the Alderman more disposed to enjoy the luxury of feasting upon it.

Mr. *Sheridan* declared himself a decided enemy to the game laws as they stand at present, considering them a code highly partial, unjust, and tyrannical. He agreed with the right honourable gentleman, that property was the creature of law; and surely it would be conceded to him, that the law ought to follow up its own principle and afford protection to what it created, this species of property was to be protected by, and not (as was often the case) be made the *game* of law. Was it consistent with law, or common sense, to make it criminal in any man to kill the hare that fed upon and destroyed his young corn? Was it criminal to remove that animal which ate the produce of his land, because it was necessary to the sport and amusement of classes above him? He could not agree with the right honourable gentleman, that if game were made property it would be more generally destroyed. In fact, the lower orders would in that case feel a greater interest in its preservation. He had however no hesitation to avow that he saw more difficulty in regulating the
game

game than he was prepared to remedy. If it was made property, it might be the cause of bringing men to the gallows and the gibbet. He therefore wished to let the subject lie over to another session, when gentlemen would enable themselves to come better prepared upon the subject. The statute of George I. enacted such disproportionate punishment for killing game, that it was in his opinion a disgrace to the statute book, as many persons had suffered imprisonment for life, merely for partaking of that pleasure which the law decreed exclusively to others, and which monopoly could not be defended on any principle of right, humanity or justice. He therefore wished that a Bill were brought in to repeal it.

Mr. *Harrison* said, he conceived what the honourable gentleman had just mentioned, was alone a sufficient reason for passing this Bill, since, although the penalty was only five pounds, a person was liable to be detained in prison all his life for the expences, which commonly amounted to fifty or sixty pounds more. He stated, as another reason why he disapproved of the present game laws the summary remedy they provided, if a body of people came armed upon a man's property, and the servants opposed their invasion, and they killed any of those servants, they were justified for having done it; if, on the other hand, any one of those servants killed one of them, he was found guilty of murder. He knew that such cases had occurred in courts of justice, and he therefore thought the Bill would be of service if it were committed, and then suffered to lay over another year.

Mr. *Jenkinson* professed himself a strenuous advocate for the preservation of game, as affording a favourite amusement, and a strong inducement for gentlemen to live in the country, from which greater benefits were derived to the nation at large, than seemed to be generally imagined. Many of the evils that existed in a neighbouring nation, and which not a little contributed to accelerate the revolution, were in a great degree occasioned by gentlemen not residing on their estates, and by their absence, losing all influence over those who cultivated their lands. In England, the amusement of shooting, &c. enticed gentlemen to remain in the country many of the summer and winter months, and particularly the latter, when their presence was most acceptable and advantageous to the poor. He said, he was enabled to judge of the effect from comparing one part of the county in which he had been, where gentlemen did so, to another part of the same county, where they did not, and the difference of prosperity and content was almost incredible. Nor would the making of game property

property, tend to increase that property, but rather he believed to destroy the diversion. As things stood at present, the farmer had a right to order off any gentleman who came to hunt on his farm, which he is never inclined to avail himself of, when he sees no damage will ensue to him; were the farmer is to share in the game, and regard it as his property, then, indeed, would he order him off, seeing otherwise that his property and profit will be injured; and in most parts of the country, if gentlemen were confined to their own estates, they would not highly estimate the amusement. As to what was said by an honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) that property once given, all the consequences of property should follow, no notion could be more erroneous; in the case of a farmer and landholder, the law gives them that property but conditionally. The farmer has the land for other uses, and for other sources of profit, not indiscriminately for all, and consequently pays less for it. And this stands good in many analogies to the game laws; for instance, in the discovery of a mine, which undoubtedly does not become the property of the farmer. Mr. Jenkinson said, he had no objection to some mitigation of the game laws; or to giving farmers the right of sporting, on their own land, but could never agree to give them permission to sell the game; were they restricted in that respect they might share in the amusement without any temptation to convert their right into an abuse.

Sir Robert Salisbury said, he concurred with the honourable gentleman who had just sat down, and would freely consent that every man should enjoy the right of sporting on his own premises.

Sir J. Rous opposed the Bill as unpopular; he said he had conversed with many farmers on the subject, and they all concurred in disapprobation of the regulations proposed, as opening a source for continual contentions and disputes.

Mr. Cocks declared himself averse to the Bill, on the ground of attempting to introduce a change in our whole system of laws and government, which our ancestors had so wisely established and sealed with their blood; of that system, he said, the game laws were a part, and if some of them were objectionable, they might be amended. He could not therefore see upon what grounds gentlemen endeavoured to substitute new doctrines in the place of our constitution. (Mr. Cocks was here called to order by Mr. Francis, but continued to treat that gentleman's opinion as absurd. The law, he said, gives all property, but it does not give the landholder any right to kill game, it cannot therefore be his property.) Mr. Cocks continued to deprecate all innovations, and to exhort

exhort the House, that if they loved the constitution, they should be vigilant to preserve it.

Mr. *Francis*, in explanation, thanked the honourable gentleman for the epithets of kindness he bestowed on his arguments and his intentions, but contended that what he advanced was in perfect regularity of reasoning; if every creature that comes to injure the property of the farmer cannot be destroyed by him, then it may be said that one has the property, and another the produce of the land.

Mr. *Curwen* congratulated himself and the country, that there was only one person who had avowed himself willing to defend the existing game laws. He perfectly agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the propriety of preserving the game, and being rigorously severe against poachers. There was however a law paramount to all these, namely, that no one shall be injured in his property. As the laws stood at present, he said, the hardships endured by the farmers could scarcely be conceived, much less adequately described. Even in Russia, where the right of the subject is little attended to, the privilege of sporting is obtained for a small pecuniary consideration. And surely it never was more wise and expedient than at present, to conciliate the affections, and produce an attention from the lower orders of the people; whatever therefore some gentlemen might insinuate about innovations, nothing could deter him from performing what he conceived to be his duty, and what he now proposed, he felt to be a very serious and urgent one. If the Bill were committed, the House might alter and modify it in the committee, so as to render it unexceptionable. As the laws stood, there were not more than 12,000 certificates taken out, so that not one fourth of the persons interested in the soil possessed the free use of their own property. With respect to poachers, the Bill would render the crime different, and thereby reduce the number of offences. At all events he was happy to have turned the thoughts of House to the subject; and whatever might be the fate of the present Bill, his resolution to pursue the measure would not be in the least enfeebled. He would even now declare it to be his intention, at some future period, to move, that the eighth of George the First, the twenty-sixth of George the Second, and the second of George the Third, be repealed. Of these motions he would give due notice.

The House then divided,

Ayes, (for the Bill)

Noes, (Against it.)

Majority

17

65

48

COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed, that it is the opinion of this House that provision be made for funding navy-bills to the amount of 4,3000,000l.—Resolved.

On the motion of Mr. Rose, the following sums were voted: 233,000l. to make good the deficiencies of the civil list.—189,000l. for the relief of French refugees. 28,500l. for American civil officers. 2,900l. for defraying the extraordinary expences of the mint. 1,800l. for printing the journals of the House. 1,300l. for returns of the average price of sugar. 384l. for improving the approaches to the two Houses of parliament. 1,500l. for expences of the settlement in New South Wales. 5,000l. for expences of the prosecution of Warren Hastings, Esq. 2,700l. for the purchase of the parliament office. 200,000l. for the reduction of the national debt. 2,300,000l. for making good the grants voted by parliament. 20,000l. for expences of the settlements on the coast of Africa. 3,000l. to the board of agriculture. 3,000l. to the British museum.

He gave notice that in the committee of supply, on the second of May, he would move that provision be made for a subsidy to the King of Sardinia, and other sums not yet voted.

COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that he had disposed of the lottery for the next year, consisting of 60,000 tickets, after an eager competition, for 780,000l. The prizes amounted to 500,000l. so that there would be a clear saving to the public of 280,000l.

A resolution was passed accordingly, granting to his majesty the sum of 780,000l. to be raised by way of lottery.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY May 2.

CONDUCT OF ADMINISTRATION.

The Marquis of Lansdown addressed the woolstack in effect as follows:—Sensible as I am of the great improbability of any motion of mine meeting the assent of a majority of your lordships, it may perhaps excite some surprise, that on the present occasion I should offer myself to your attention. I have only to answer in my own defence, that if ever I weighed a subject more than another it is this—whether I should ever again
trouble

trouble your lordships in this House. I was not reduced to this state of perplexity from any motive of personal disrespect to your lordships, nor from any feeling of having ever experienced any personal neglect since I had the honour to sit in this House; on the contrary, I have to acknowledge every mark of attention, and many private obligations. But the improbability of any exertion that I could make, being successful in working a change upon the measures which have been recently adopted, and the system which is at present acted upon, discouraged me from undertaking a task, which I had every reason to fear would prove fruitless in the end, accompanied as it is with a sacrifice of health, the trouble of attendance, and above all, an intrusion on the patience of your lordships. Why then, it will be asked, with these powerful considerations to a contrary conduct before me, have I ventured to appear in my place this evening? My answer is, that had I pursued the line of conduct with these considerations suggested, I should have been under the necessity of explaining to the country the grounds upon which I acted, publicly to profess, that my retirement was dictated by no sentiment of disgust or feeling of disappointment; but I had been influenced by circumstances, which if disclosed, might tend to raise discontent without doors, which it has been the constant wish of my heart as much as possible to suppress.

“Another motive which has influenced me to trouble your lordships this day is—on the 15th of December, 1779, and on the 8th of February, 1780, I proposed two motions, the effect of which was, to suggest that system of public operations with which it would be my wish that the resolutions I am to submit to your consideration this evening, should be followed up. In the language that was held out after these motions were proposed, they were called not republican but anarchical. They were said to be the instruments of alarm, and the committee appointed to give them effect was termed a committee of safety. I had the satisfaction, however, of seeing the minister of the day obliged to come forward to propose a commission of public accounts. That commission was composed of independent men, some of whom are dead, and whose memories cannot be held in too high respect; others of whom are still alive, and have every claim upon their country's gratitude.—The measures which were then adopted were pursued with great assiduity, embracing an extensive and uniform reform of constitutional operations. In this system I was happy to be supported by many in the present administration, who at that time were inclined to go to the full extent of my views.—

Since that time, however, there has been a suspension of that system, and a desertion among its friends. Far be it from me to set out with imputing blame to the present members of administration. All I wish is, to offer them an opportunity to vindicate their own characters, and to satisfy the public opinion. If they stand firm to the resolution which they then voted, "that the influence of the crown was increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished," and to which they were sacredly pledged, it was but fair that their reputations should not suffer in the opinion of the world, from the misconceptions of any man or any set of men. If they have violated the pledge which they had given, and deserted those principles which they once held, if they have apostatized from that cause which they set out with espousing, it was equally just and proper that the public should be in possession of documents, upon which to form an impartial estimate of their character. For the sake then both of ministers themselves, and for the sake of that respect which was due to the country, with whose interests they are entrusted, let the motives of their conduct be clearly known and distinctly ascertained.

"It is not my intention to enter into a detailed examination of all the various papers upon the table, but only to touch upon the most capital points which they contain, not that the whole is not highly worthy of the perusal and attentive consideration of your lordships, but because they embrace a field too wide and extensive to be surveyed at one view. They certainly will not be found so entertaining as Lorenzo de Medici; but I have no doubt, that you will be highly gratified and indulged in perusing their contents.

"The first particular to which I would draw your lordships' attention, is the second report of the commissioners of accounts, upon the subject of consolidating all the different boards into one; an expedient which would abolish fifteen out of twenty-five places, and effect a considerable diminution of the public expence. And I cannot refrain from expressing some surprise, that this resolution has never been acted upon, not only because its importance was sufficient to justify the plan which it proposed being adopted; but also, because this report was decidedly approved of in 1782, by a vote of the House of Commons, in which this necessary resolution was termed a noble, grand, and constitutional object. The reduction of expence attending such a reform would certainly be very considerable, but this was an object comparatively trifling when balanced with the diminution of influence, as
each

each of these places might be supposed capable of gaining a member of parliament, if he was to be gained.

"I would in the next place beg to call your lordship's attention to the 9th report, respecting the pay of the army. The way that the army is paid, has been justly said in the report to be a scene of composition and decomposition of mystery, ambiguity, and fraud. From the general officer to the common soldier, it was impossible for the army to ascertain whether they were imposed on or not. Instead of two simple articles, of subsistence and arrears, there are separate and distinct accounts kept for agency, cloathing, subsistence, Chelsea, and a number of other articles, which serve only to accumulate expences upon the country, and to bewilder those whose business it is to enquire into the mode in which the money of the nation is expended. We all know what is the minister's intention in the negotiation of loans; to allow so much in the three *per cents*, and so much in the four *per cents*, a *douceur*, a lottery ticket, and so on. It is to conceal from the country the real state of the bargain, in the same way that the ministers of a certain profession chuse to write and to speak, rather in a dead than a living language, as a veil for the errors and absurdities into which they would mislead their followers. Why a poor soldier should have so much to pay to the right, and so much to the left, so much backward, and so much forward, it is impossible to conceive, except it be for the purpose of fraud and concealment, as a pretext for supporting a number of idle clerks, by the sweat of a deserving soldiery, and to enable ministers, without detection, to apply the public money to purposes different from those for which it was voted by parliament. If this is not the case, why was not the clear, simple, and easy plan suggested by the commissioners in their report adopted, the purpose of which was at once to guard against imposition being practised upon the soldier, and to provide for the proper application of the public money?

"The next report to which I would advert, is the eleventh, relating to the unfunded debt, the object of which, (certainly an extremely desirable one) was to acquaint the people with the real extent of the burdens which they incurred in the course of a war, and to provide against the debt, increasing more rapidly than the means of paying it. But this, like every other beneficial proposition, has been rejected by the present ministers. In the fourteenth report, respecting the patent officers of the board of customs, these gentlemen are divided into four classes; first, those that are illegal, secondly, those that are useless, thirdly, those who execute their offices by means of deputies,

deputies, and lastly, such as may be consolidated. These officers are of antient institution. The farmers were, in process of time, found to supersede their necessity, so that at length they became mere sinecures. It was the object of the commissioners of accounts to abolish these needless officers, and to effect this is one of the purposes for which I submit to your lordships the resolutions which I shall have the honour to move this evening. In the port of London alone, they are sixty-one in number, enjoying salaries to the amount of twenty-six thousand pounds a year. The saving to the public, however, is a trivial consideration when compared with the benefit which would accrue to trade from their being abolished. In the out-ports they are one hundred and fifty-seven persons of the same description, with salaries to the amount of 140,000*l*. To shew the abuses which are committed in this department, I shall quote an example or two which have come within the sphere of my own knowledge. In the year 1782, one of these deputies for the port of Liverpool died. A successor was appointed, but it was found, that it was impossible for him to discharge the duty, because the bonds, &c. were in possession of the patentee in the East Indies, a circumstance which occasioned a very considerable loss to the revenue. Another instance, equally ludicrous, also came within my knowledge. On one occasion, an officer of the customs wanted a deputy, but the salary which he offered was so small, that he could not find any person to accept the office; the consequence of which was, that the public business of that department, was actually at a stand for three years. Even at the present moment, one person, in many instances, held two or three offices, which were originally intended as checks upon one another, and the different duties of commissioner, collector, and comptroller, were all devolved upon a single individual. Is it fit that such audacious abuses (I cannot apply a gentler term) should be tolerated under a well regulated government, and this after a Bill was drawn up for their abolition by Sir William Musgrave, ratified by the board of customs, sanctioned by the opinion of one of his majesty's law officers, and supported at the time by all the influence of the crown. That Bill for the reform of patent offices is still to be found in the office of the secretary of state; why it has been suffered to sleep there, I cannot imagine. It was one of the great objects of the commissioners of accounts, to remonstrate against all pluralities, gratuities, and sinecures; and it is unnecessary to point out the importance of such a regulation, it was obvious upon general principles to the most superficial

ficial thinker; but surely in a naval war, which has not been the most prosperous, after such reform having been so long ago pressed, the country had a right to expect that all abuses should be sifted, and that that department should be cleared of every cobweb, whether it was the result of time, of negligence, or corruption. The mint was also pronounced by the commissioners to require some reform, which never, to my knowledge, has taken place. After what was said upon the crown-lands, I should have expected some improvement on this score, or at least, not to have heard of any more grants of these lands being made to individuals.

But this leads me to a more important and pressing inquiry into the increased influence of the crown, which, in my opinion, has augmented, to a great, enormous, and alarming degree. If I am mistaken, I shall be glad to have my arguments refuted, and my opinions set right. I am afraid, however, that facts speak too strongly in my support. When we consider that sums of unexampled magnitude have been expended without the approbation of parliament, upon objects unheard of in the history of the country; that 1,300,000*l.* without the consent of the legislature, have been spent in erecting barracks in this kingdom, which are neither more nor less than armed fortresses, what are we to think? (*A cry of hear! hear!*) Do any noble lords cry out when I give them this designation? I repeat it, that the barracks are nothing less than *armed fortresses*; for if barracks be properly supplied with armed men, ammunition, and a few carronades, I appeal to any professional gentleman if there be a possibility of reducing them, except with cannon; so that we are now come back to the situation that we were in previous to the revolution. If any peer will rise up in his place, and declare upon his honour, whether, when he read that passage in Judge Blackstone respecting barracks, he did not believe that it was the true interpretation of the law of England, I shall wave my argument as far as it goes. Perhaps precedent is pleaded by way of apology? But are we always to be guided by precedent? If we had acted according to precedent, the *Habeas Corpus* act, and every thing almost that is valuable in our constitution, had never existed. And though there had been a few precedents in respect to barracks, was this any reason for extending the system so far as it is at present? There are many medicines in the apothecary's shop, which, if taken in moderation, may operate beneficially upon the health, but which if administered in large doses, will act as poison. Though barracks, to a certain extent, might be necessary and useful, that admission does not disprove, that to
their

their present extent, they may not overturn the constitution. When I look at the army in all its departments, I can perceive an alarming increase of crown influence. Indeed it seems to be the system of the present reign to pay all attention to the army. The soldiery get an augmentation of pay from the King without the knowledge of parliament, and a variety of douceurs is given them, the credit of which is appropriated to the sovereign, but the expence of which is kindly placed to the account of the nation. Formerly, only the younger branches of families were desirous of going into the army; now, not individuals alone, but whole families are enlisted: the consequence of which is, there is an end of all education; the valuable constitutional tracts, and various books on the revolution which used to be read when I came into the world, lie neglected upon stalls, and the sciences are left without a votary, with the solitary exception of tactics, which at present seems wholly to engross the attention of our youth. The defence of the country, instead of resting with the younger sons of families, was now only shared by them with their elder brothers, who ought to be the guardians of the national liberty, and the public trust. I know of two persons of high rank and fortune, who have gone into the army. In case of an invasion I would wish to see every hand armed in its defence, but I never wish to see the country thus converted not into a militia, but into a standing army.

"From the ordinaries I proceed to the extraordinaries of the army, which, by the commissioners of accounts, were represented as an evil which called in the loudest terms for a remedy, and that at a time when they were much more considerable than they are at present." The report of the committee in 1782, placed the subject in the clearest point of view. It was in the following terms:

Your committee cannot help observing, that the enormous amount of extraordinaries in the foregoing account, incurred without consent of parliament, is an abuse of the most alarming nature, enabling ministers to deceive the nation, by keeping back the great expences of the war, and concealing thereby the extent of its engagements. It has been stated by parliament, when the object was inconsiderable to what it is at present, as a dangerous invasion of the rights, and little different from levying money without the consent of parliament. The debt is not only incurred, but paid also, by the authority of the minister, and that too out of money appropriated to other services, leaving no option to the house when the account comes to be laid before them. This abuse has arisen to such a height as calls for immediate correction. It amounts, in less than seven years war, to more than fifteen millions, whilst in every year's account we see the appointment of useless offices with large salaries, contingent bills allowed even to inferior officers, and drafts to a great amount allowed without controul from governors of colonies and plantations; a part of which, we confess, may indeed arise necessarily from the nature and circumstances of the war; but to demands of this nature, no revenue,

venue, no resources, can be adequate, if such exorbitant expences are subject to no controul.

The committee therefore submit to the wisdom of the House, whether probable estimates laid before the house, of provisions, freight, and the expences of provincial troops, whether the limiting contingent bills, to be allowed only to principals in office; some proper checks upon the drafts of foreign governors, requiring to be laid before the house, the grounds of their demand, and the mode of expenditure; a prohibition to create unnecessary offices; the making up to the 31st of December, in every year, in the same manner as the navy, the account of the army extraordinaries, and that the same which have hitherto been delayed, be presented in ten days after the meeting of parliament; or other more effectual regulations to the same purposes, may not be necessary to restrain these abuses.

Another paper he would read extracted from the writings of a person of whom it was only justice to say, that he treated the subject with the most perfect ability, and expressed his sentiments in the most convincing manner. It was from Mr. Hatfel's precedents, vol. III. p. 154, 156.

In all the different services, the navy, the army, and the ordnance, there has always been an exceeding, or debt contracted upon each, which has been brought before parliament the subsequent session, under the title of navy debt, or of extraordinaries incurred and not provided for. Formerly these exceedings were contained within some limits, as appears from the account entered in the journals during the war of the succession; and even in the war which terminated in 1748. In what is commonly called the German war, these sums first became large; but in the late war, carried on in America, they exceeded all bounds. There was a degree of negligence or extravagance, or both, in those who had the conduct of this department, which rendered all the votes of the house of commons, or bills for appropriating the supplies, ridiculous and nugatory. The sums demanded, upon the head of extraordinaries of the army incurred and not provided for, during this period, fell not very much short of the whole sums voted by parliament upon estimate for that service; nay in the year 1782, they appear to have actually exceeded them. This was such a shameful prostitution of the money of the public, that though perhaps the distance, and magnitude, and nature of the American war might be pleaded as some alleviation and excuse for the generals abroad who commanded, or for the ministers at home who ought to have controuled those commanders—nothing can justify the House of Commons, who permitted this practice to continue uninterrupted through several sessions; and whose more immediate duty it was to have examined into the contracts and other services, pretended to have been performed and to have pointed out and punished those frauds and abuses, which were afterwards with no great difficulty detected by the commissioners of public accounts. The general power which was given by the resolution of the 3d of April, 1734, to the ministers, was a measure entirely subversive of the rules of parliament, and contrary to the practice which has been wisely established since the revolution, of appropriating the supplies to the services for which they had been voted.

We see therefore, that this proceeding did not pass without much difficulty and debate; and that soon after another, and so far as it was limited, a better mode was adopted, which, though it gave the ministers credit for the manner of disposing of the money voted, confined that credit to a precise and special sum.

It is therefore incumbent upon the House of Commons, not only to make this supply as small as possible, but in a subsequent session to inquire into the particular expenditure of this sum: and to be assured that it is strictly applied to those purposes for which it was intended, and not squandered loosely, improvidently, wantonly, or perhaps corruptly.

† Whoever examines with accuracy the accounts which were delivered into the house of commons, under the title of 'Extraordinary service incurred and not provided

provided for," during the American war, will find in them several articles so strange, so unconnected with the account, of which they make a considerable part, and in themselves so unnecessary, that the observations and expressions which I have used here, will not appear unapplicable.

If ministers say, that in the account upon the table, there was no instance of money loosely, wantonly, extravagantly, or, perhaps, corruptly squandered; I will venture to say, that they are so mysteriously drawn out, that it is altogether impossible for any man to make any thing of them. It is not an accidental ambiguity, nor any difficulty naturally to be expected in the elucidation of a complicated subject. But it has required ingenuity, of no mean kind, to wrap them up in that obscurity in which they are enveloped. Upon the present system of keeping the public accounts, there is nothing which may not come under the head of army extraordinaries. In these accounts I see great services performed at nominally a small expence; whereas I observe thousands upon thousands squandered upon the most trifling and insignificant objects. I received an anonymous letter the other day from the city, informing me that 40,000*l.* has been sent to the Dey of Algiers. I took some trouble to inquire into the truth of the fact, and I find that a very large sum, though not quite to this amount, has been sent. But thirty or forty thousand pounds may be disposed of at the pleasure of ministers, without the consent of parliament; special care is, however, taken to inform us of the purchase of a two-penny medicine chest. In these accounts I see a great many sums expended under the general title *for the public service*, and ditto ditto very frequently occurring. There were a variety of different services, of the exact sums expended in each of which few members of parliament were able to inform their constituents. In one instance, I find, that a sum is paid *for the public good*! and even the accounts undigested and unarranged, instead of being produced, as they ought to be, upon Mr. Hatfield's plan, on the first day of the session of parliament, are kept back till they are reluctantly extorted from ministers at this late period of the session. Is it possible, I would ask any noble lord, to tell from these accounts how much Martinique, how much the expedition to the coast of France, how much the East or West India service has cost? And are not these objects, each of which have their precise value, and the expence of which it would be exceedingly desirable for the country to be informed of? One would think that even ministers themselves would be anxious to institute some inquiry as a check upon the numerous hands which are daily in the public purse; and that the country may have an opportunity of discerning be-

twen

tween the honest man and the knave. The newspapers may make me talk nonsense, if they please, but if there be a paper which boasts of its principles, I hope it will give extracts from Mr. Hatfield's book, that the people may know at least what *ought* to be the conduct of those to whom they have committed their most important interests. Indeed were ministers of this country to change places with the clerk of the house of commons, it would be a good *amende*, and could such a change take place, there is not a peer in the house that might not feel proud to act as clerk to such a minister as Mr. Hatfield.

"Another article on the list of abuses, (and a long list it is) is the appointment of a third secretary of state. I am not given to quibble about trifles, but this is a matter which I could not pass by without mentioning; and I am rather inclined to take notice of it, when I recollect the language which was held by an honourable member of another house, when the office was abolished some years ago. 'It has died in state, was disposed of with funeral honours, and he hoped was consigned for ever to oblivion.' But now it is revived, and revived with its emoluments and patronage by those very men who supported its abolition. What does such conduct put it in the power of Mr. Thelwall not to say? Will he not say, that there is no dependence to be placed in any man whatever, and that there are no professions of patriotism, come from what quarter they will, in which the people are not liable, are not likely to be deceived. I find, however, that though ministers have not paid much attention to the suggestions of the committee relative to the abolition of old offices and boards, they have most scrupulously complied with their ideas of the necessity of constituting new ones. In one instance, the Board of Naval Architecture over which general Bentham, a gentleman I have the honour to know, presided, they had acted right. I approve of the institution, and all I wish is, that it may not be converted into sinecures. The Transport Board, I conceive to be useless and unnecessary, as the former was proper and expedient. Transports in time of war are certainly much wanted; and that want I experienced very severely at the end of the American war; but was a board the most proper institution to secure a sufficient supply? Is there any person in the house that does not know how little business is done by a board. One active man, such as Mr. Atkinson, if you would give him confidence and time, could do the whole of the business much better than a board. I know the arguments in favour of boards, drawn from the check which the different individuals, of which they are composed, may give to one another. But I have always

been of opinion, that one man, under the Board of Treasury, would transact the business with much greater effect, and with equal security to the public. I mention the Board of Treasury, because all the public money ought to flow directly from the Treasury; and instead of giving the first lord a staff, which is the present badge of the office, I would give him a knife to cut off every man's fingers that dared thrust his hand in the public purse. When I was in office, instead of employing a Victualling Board, I made all the contracts for meat, &c. by a confidential person under myself. This I know might subject me to an imputation of wishing to embezzle the public money, but I was conscious of being superior to such a wish; I despised the insinuation, and I am certain the country gained by the mode of procedure which I adopted. As the attempt succeeded it passed without any observation, which if unsuccessful, it would have excited. It had been a plan in agitation at one time for government to have transports of its own, and to use the 40 gun ships for that purpose. There must be incredible inconveniences, and very considerable loss attending the hiring of transports upon the spur of the occasion, like the hiring of hackney coaches at a moment's warning. You must necessarily pay an unreasonable price for them, because you are limited in point of time; and after all, you put your troops entirely at the mercy of a crew whom you know nothing about, and who may betray you before you are aware. It was the same as in other cases, people were best served by their own horses, and paid less than for job horses, and so in many other transactions in private life. By the abolition of this board, there would be a saving of 5000*l.* a year to the public, though I can scarcely bring myself to believe that the board can be intended as permanent. I may be mistaken, however. The commissioners seem to find themselves quite at home, and to have made arrangements for their continuance in office; they have got their house keeper and domestic establishment, and would no doubt have their necessary women, and I dare to say, would not be easily dislodged, unless if some troublesome man in this house should insist on their being thrown out like so many pieces of old useless furniture. Every service, however frivolous, might thus have a permanent establishment. Offices and salaries might be instituted as in Portugal after its conquest by the Spaniards, where a very handsome provision was allotted to a person for transmitting a fish from Lisbon to Madrid for the king's table. But the time would fail me to reckon all the catalogue of abuses which have been introduced and sanctioned by the present administration. I am tired with surveying

surveying all the contents of the red book, that chest of corruption, which will soon be nothing else than a record of publick establishments. It would supersede every species of reading in the houses of country gentlemen, and usurp the place of the good old tracts of the reign of king William. It would of itself form a compendious library, and fathers would be ambitious of teaching their children nothing else. And all this has taken place under the conduct of two noble lords, who came into office abetting the principle that the influence of the crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. The measures of civil regulation which have been lately adopted, open a truly deplorable prospect of our internal situation. When the late famous bills were before parliament, I was in the country, partly on account of my health, and partly in the idea that my attendance would be of no avail, to counteract the intentions of those who brought them forward; if I could suppose that my exertions would be accompanied with any public advantage, no motive of health, amusement, or business, should prevent me from applying my talents in that quarter where I could hope to do most signal service to my country.

“ In the India Bill there was an immense patronage accruing to the crown, that threatened to overwhelm the constitution, and it almost became a question, whether it would not be true policy to abandon it altogether. Another Bill of most destructive tendency we have reason to dread will soon be brought before us, the principle of which is to establish a government police in the city of Westminster, and which, I am afraid, may soon be extended to the country. I think no police ought to be entertained but an elective one, like that of the city of London, nor would there be wanting men who would take a pride in discharging the duties which the situation of a magistrate required, in a much better manner than gentlemen from the profession of the law, at a great expence; such a person as Alderman Skinner, who had ruled the city without violence, would much better preserve the police than a pensioned dependent justice. There is still, however, another evil, which, from its magnitude, is great enough to swallow up all the rest, the unlimited credit upon the Bank, which has been voted to the minister in a Bill repealing a salutary statute of William and Mary, restricting the credit of government upon the Bank, and which would have passed through the House unnoticed, had it not been for the vigilance of an honourable friend of mine (the Earl of Lauderdale) whose talents and whose virtues do credit to the country from which he comes. I must beg not to be understood in any thing I say

on this subject, to reflect in the most distant degree upon the conduct of the Bank; on the contrary, I admire it; and I now declare upon my honour, that I do not believe the Bank issues a single note, that it has not a representative for in gold or silver. As I have never been a governor of the Bank, I cannot speak with certainty, nor can I even speak with the degree of certainty that the governor's wife could do, to whom her husband said, "Be quiet my dear, for no person knows so much, who has not passed the chair." I see the Bank so much under the influence of government driven to the necessity of stopping its advances, I can impute it to nothing but a fear to go farther. But even this shewed that every thing must have bounds. When people feel unconstrained they wish to try how far they can go, till at last they come to the end of their tether. In such a situation as this alarm spreads, and the most serious inconveniences arise. I have heard, that for a ten thousand pound prize, a number of coal-heavers, the holders, were forced to give 100*l.* for discount. I find too, that this ministry, by whom the lottery was considered a fund which was not to be continued, has made it in a manner a permanent article of revenue. By the repeal of the act alluded to, the Bank was at liberty to stretch their credit to government as far as it pleased, and the minister, without consent of parliament, can have an ample resource upon occasion, within his reach. The Bank, on the present system, may be converted into a citadel in the midst of London, and stand in the place of parliament between the king and the nation.

"On the chapter of finances I shall not now enter, as the papers are too voluminous to go through at one sitting. I shall only say that they open a more dreadful picture of the situation than it is possible almost for the human imagination to conceive. On this, however, I purposely avoid enlarging at present, not wishing to introduce any financial question under the constitutional view of the question. Frightful as bankruptcy is, and grievous as our burdens may be, there was still some hope, while our constitution remained unimpaired: when it is invaded, ruin, irresistible and irremediable, can only be our fate. The marquis concluded with moving the following resolutions:

"That, as we see no effectual steps taken to realize these measures of reform, for which the present ministers, at their entrance into office, stood strongly pledged to the public, or those earnestly recommended in the reports upon the table, by two boards of commissioners, both appointed by parliament.

"It is incumbent on this House to inquire into the cause of so extraordinary an omission, as well as,

"Whether

"Whether any new officers have since been created?"

"Whether any old salaries have been increased on slight pretences?"

"Whether any salaries have been granted for special purposes, and continued, though the reasons for them have ceased?"

"Whether any warrants for beneficial grants have been directed: And, on the whole.

"Whether the public expences have increased beyond the supplies annually granted by parliament?"

"This, which would be a duty incumbent upon parliament, were the existing war ever so necessary, just, and successful, is become most urgent and indispensable, in a contest at once bloody and expensive beyond example, without plan or object, except such objects as the misconduct of the war first created: attended with a waste of money, profuse almost beyond imagination, which has already reduced our trade to a dependance on the very warfare, which is fundamentally destroying it, and has so exhausted our resources, as to drive us to the wretched expedient of reviving taxes, which were, a few years since repealed upon the ground of thereby increasing the revenue—an effect which that repeal produced, and a policy which must therefore, on the return of peace, be again resorted to, and which will, consequently, bring with it the necessity of finding new taxes, if new and productive taxes can be invented in our then exhausted state.

"In a situation so alarming, and so manifestly tending to destroy the confidence of the people in parliament, which (as every reflecting man must have with deep concern observed) has for some years past been rapidly on the decline; it behoves parliament, by a timely revival of its ancient energy and integrity, to convince the people, that their constitutional guardians are awake to the common danger, and are determined to come forward with such firm measures of public order and reform, as will effectually relieve the subject, and remedy evils, which, if still suffered to accumulate, will be past all remedy, and must inevitably terminate in public confusion."

Lord Grenville said, he felt himself under considerable difficulty and embarrassment, on account of the noble Marquis's argument and his motion being so inconsonant and opposite in their nature, that they could not both be replied to in one speech. If he rightly understood the noble Marquis's motion, it stated many points upon which he imputed blame to ministers, and on which he called for inquiry; though the task might be laborious to himself, and tedious to the House, he felt himself called upon to make some reply upon these points. The motion altogether, he said, was one of the most extraordinary that had ever been brought before the House. The noble Marquis had, in his speech, expressly said, that he should not, on the present occasion, go into the subject of finance, and yet the motion expressly states, "that the war has already reduced our trade to a dependance on itself for support, and has so exhausted our resources, as to drive us to revive taxes which had been repealed." His lordship said this was certainly alluding to our finances very materially, and put him to the necessity of observing to their lordships, that it called upon them to undo every thing which they had been doing during the last three years, merely on the assertion of the noble marquis, for which he certainly had not adduced any

any proof, and which he would take upon him to say, was not founded in fact, since that our trade had been repeatedly shewn to be in a more prosperous and flourishing state than it had ever been remembered at any former period, during the continuance of a war. To the principal points, therefore, of the noble Marquis's speech he never could assent, and he must positively deny that no steps had been taken to produce any of the reforms pointed out in the reports of the commissioners of accounts. For his own part, he was not then in parliament, but he thought it but justice to others not to let that assertion pass unnoticed. He must likewise remark, that though those different articles of reform might appear necessary or expedient to the commissioners at that time, they might not apply to the circumstances of the present or future times. Instead of no steps being taken on those reports by his Majesty's ministers since the year 1782, it must be in the recollection of the House, that several Bills were brought in, and had become acts of the legislature upon those reports; why then was he and those who acted with him to be arraigned now for what was omitted before they came into office? Any noble lord certainly had a right to come down to that House, and make any sort of speech against ministers that he thought proper, but he declared he never had been put upon his defence more unexpectedly than he was that day, nor did he ever come down less prepared for a motion like the present.

He proceeded to the first point argued by the noble Marquis: the consolidation of some of the public offices of revenue. Upon this subject he would, without going into minute details of what number of places might be abolished, freely give his opinion, that if he was consulted upon the subject, he would say, that he thought the plan impracticable, from the large increase of the revenue, and from all he could learn there was no set of men who deserved more of public reward for their alacrity and zeal in doing the duty intrusted to them, than the gentlemen who held those very places which the noble Marquis wished to be abolished.

The next point was the army extraordinaries, and he here must remind the House of Bills and regulations made in the pay-office, both by Mr. Burke and Colonel Barre, when pay-masters of the forces, which had afforded much salutary reform in that department. The next point was the mysterious and concealed manner of negotiating loans, and the lottery had been mentioned as one bad part of them. It ought, however, to be known, that this was the first administration that could say the lottery formed no part of these loans, which
had

had been in his mind transacted in the most precise, distinct, and intelligible way that was possible. It was next said, that the unfunded debt ought to be ascertained, and that a clause in an act of parliament required it. Formerly the navy and ordnance unfunded debt used to lie over, but since that act it was not the case, and they had always been ascertained and laid upon the table of the House of Commons within the year.

The noble marquis had then, by insinuation and a long string of strange stories, pointed out many abuses that he had heard to have happened by the principals in patent offices in the customs, having neglected or refused to appoint deputies. When such neglects happened, he assured the noble marquis that the treasury could, and would not fail to appoint deputies. With regard to patent offices, they were held by a legal tenure, and could not be taken from the holder without reasonable compensation, and to make the satisfaction the possessors would have a right to expect, would be a much more considerable expence to the public, than letting the patentees preserve their situation. Such of them as were to be abolished, would be abolished as they became vacant, and their existence now could not be reckoned as giving any influence to the present government, who did not create them. If they had renewed any that had become vacant, then a charge might be made against them; but, with as they had, he believed, only one exception, expired, here ends all that the noble marquis had argued from the reports on that point. On the principal points therefore, of the noble marquis's charge, he had stated, that one of them was impracticable, and that the others were already effected. The principal object of attention which ministers had taken up, was certainly the most essential one, namely, the speedy auditing of public accounts after the debt was contracted; the best check against all fraud, and what the present ministers had more credit for attending to, than any that had gone before them.

The next topic was one that he could not reply to without feeling warmly on the observations of the noble marquis. It had been said by the noble marquis, that the naval events of the present war had not been the most prosperous. Where did the noble marquis get his information? He begged leave to ask him, in what period of the history of this country, in the reign of what king, under the auspices of what minister or set of ministers, had the naval glory of Great Britain soared to a higher pitch, than in the present contest?

Where

Where had we not been crowned with success at sea? In what part of the globe was the pride of the british flag humbled? Was it in the Mediterranean? No; we there bore sovereign sway. Was it in the channel? Certainly not, not a line of battle ship of the enemy's dared to appear. Was it in the East? The loss of every possession our enemies held in that quarter, was a sufficient answer. If the noble marquis meant to assert that those exploits by which our enemies were worsted, whenever they dared engage, by which they were reduced to that situation, that not one of their frigates could come out of harbour, without falling into our hands; if such events as those were unprosperous, it was that kind of ill success which he ever wished the navy of England to be distinguished for.

When the noble marquis mentioned crown lands, Lord Grenville declared, he really had doubted where he was, or what he heard; if it was said that no steps had been taken on that point, after so much had been so ably done by the person to whose management that subject had been entrusted. As to the new grants, none had been made; nor could any be issued by law. Excepting then the consolidation of the revenue boards, and the arrangement respecting a new coinage, recommended in the reports, all the other objects had occupied the attention of, and been decided upon, by parliament. On the subject of barracks, the noble marquis had expatiated much on the dangerous tendency of acting from precedents, as by that means there was nothing so bad that it might not be justified by precedent; it was somewhat singular that the noble marquis arraigned almost at the same instant, the system of barracks as an innovation, and entirely without precedent. In an opinion which he had often heard repeated, by a great character in another place, (Mr. Fox) he agreed most completely, though they had not the fortune to agree in general politics; it was, that by the nature of the British constitution, it is a government of practice, not of theory; not framed by a constituent assembly, or a national convention, but a constitution gradually improved by the wisdom of our ancestors, grown up to be a fabric, the envy and admiration of the world, and to be judged of solely by its practice, and not by any speculative or abstract theory. With regard to barracks as an innovation, he would only state from the list on the table, that that by the old system there were barracks for twenty thousand men in time of peace, and by the new for fifteen thousand only.

He

He wished the noble marquis had not said that it seemed to be the system of the present reign to pay all their attention to the army; he wished he had called it the system of the present government; and there was no system on which they had more reason to pride themselves. It was curious to hear objections made to men of high rank and fortune being in the army. The noble lord had known of two persons of that description applying for leave to go on foreign service; had he asked him, he could have told him of fifty. It was the pride and glory of the times to step forward in a cause in which the happiness and safety of all ranks in society were so materially involved. And from the circumstance of the present state of the army, he could augur the best security for their conduct; that from the zeal with which young gentlemen went into the army, every other necessary education was neglected, he never would admit, indeed the noble marquis was himself an instance of the contrary. In early life he had been in the army, but that had not prevented him from asserting and protecting the liberties of his country from encroachments. The object of the army was not to check or destroy the liberties of the country, but to support a just, honourable, and necessary war. The extraordinaries of the army had occupied the attention of the committee of 1782, and they had stated that the unfunded debt ought to be ascertained when it could be done; but in time of war it often cannot; for instance, in the article of provision and stores, it was impossible to form calculations, therefore a speedy audit of accounts, which the commissioners had recommended, was the most essential step that could have been taken. He entertained great respect for the opinion of Mr. Hatfield; and held his talents and integrity in that degree of estimation, to which he knew them to be well entitled, but he thought it was too much to urge a resolution of a committee, and bring it as an argument to supersede an existing act of parliament.

With regard to the appointment of a third secretary of state, the appointment of his noble friend had been attended with many circumstances of great public utility, and he had no doubt that further advantages would continue to result from it. The noble marquis, he was glad to find, had no objection to the appointment of general Bentham as president of the board of naval architecture. The transport board had been the subject of much animadversion, and the noble marquis had asked whether such services could not be as well performed by individuals, as by boards? In his opinion they could not, nor did he see the application of the noble marquis's simile, about

the œconomy of purchasing horses, instead of employing job horses. Whether the transport board was to be continued in time of peace, he knew not; it certainly was essentially necessary in time of war. India he had always thought one of the greatest acquisitions of this country, and hoped the question, of whether it ought to be maintained or given up, would never be started. He replied to what was said on the police bill, which he thought had been sufficiently discussed at the time. Before it passed there was no effectual police in Westminster, and except the revenues of that city, were equal to those of London, the same sort of police could not be introduced. With regard to the minister having it in his power to desire the bank to advance any sum he wanted, no such thing existed, for the governor and directors had a discretionary power. As to the finances of the country being in a deplorable and alarming state, that, the noble marquis said, might be the subject of discussion on another day; he would only therefore say, that whenever that day came, he would exhibit a picture directly the reverse of that which the noble marquis had drawn.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, that after the general but comprehensive statements of his noble friend, it would not be necessary for him to say much, and therefore what he had to offer should chiefly be confined to the observations of the noble lord. The noble lord appeared in some degree surprised that his noble friend did not enter into a fuller explanation than he had done, of the reasons for bringing his motion before the House. The noble lord should have recollected the number of topics which his noble friend had introduced and discussed, and then he would ask him, whether it was necessary for his noble friend to fight those grounds over again, which he and his noble friend had so often contended about before. It was not necessary for his noble friend to enlarge upon any of the circumstances of the war, nor was it necessary for him to dwell upon any particulars, as they had almost all been repeatedly made the subjects of debate. The noble lord however, was not content with making this charge against his noble friend, for not entering upon the objects of his motion far enough, but he afterwards brought an accusation against him by a perverse mode of reasoning, for going too far, since he disapproved of referring to the resolution so far back as 1780, that the power of the crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. The reason why his noble friend went so far back was to shew that the administration of that day, in which the resolution was passed, as well as the subsequent administration, approved of that resolution, and
speedily

speedily endeavoured to carry it into effect, while the present administration had not only abandoned it, but absolutely acted against that which made it necessary to renew it, and carry it into more effect. The manner in which the former administrations acted upon that resolution, was by sinking and annihilating the superfluous parts of the executive government; the manner in which the present administration acted, was by creating new offices. The former reduced the board of trade and board of green cloth; the latter appointed a transport board, and erected barracks: and this was the cause of his noble friend's accusation.

He proposed to take a review of the noble lord's reply to that accusation, and in doing so, he promised to endeavour to avoid every species of detail. The noble Lord first called the attention of the House to the business of the pay office, and observed that two acts had been passed subsequent to the establishment of that office for regulating it. He admitted that, but still he begged leave to ask whether there was not a variety of abuses which existed in that office, and to which his noble friend had pointed, notwithstanding the regulation of those acts, and if his noble friend had overlooked those acts, he was guilty of no greater neglect than the colleagues of the noble lord himself. There was a particular clause in one of those acts, by which it was enacted, that all money issued from the treasury to the pay-master general should be paid into the Bank of England on his account, yet in defiance of this act 600,000*l.* had been lately issued by the first lord of the treasury, to the pay-master of his majesty's forces, and it was treated as a trivial oversight and mere incidental occurrence in the affairs of office.

The next statement of the noble lord was, that lottery tickets had not been given as a *bonus* lately to the contractors for a loan. This also, he allowed was true, but still it made no contradiction between the declaration of the noble lord, and the declaration of his noble friend. His noble friend had not objected to the gift of lottery tickets for a *bonus* as a modern practice; but to the contract for loans in general. The noble lord burst forth into a strain of animated panegyric upon the publicity of the late loans, the security of their payments, and the great advantages arising from the mode of contract. He desired to know in what the publicity consisted? Did the noble lord allude to the public shame of disposing of it, in such a way as, to use a northern phrase, had given the lease of the money market to one man. In what did the security consist? Were the people to whom he had given the bargain more se-

cure, and more to be depended upon, than any others that would have offered for it if competition had been used? And what was the advantage? Did the noble lord allude to the squandering away two millions of money, by the preference to the contractors which might otherwise have been saved? He thought the noble lord could not defend the loans without libelling his colleagues in office, and that he should in consequence have been less apt to hold them forth to public inspection.

The noble lord next acknowledged the statement of the noble marquis to be true, that the commissioners of accounts had blamed the practice of leaving a large unfunded debt unprovided for, and extenuated the present administration, by stating that a material change had taken place. How had this change taken place? exchequer bills had been issued at five per cent. interest, this year, and he wished to know how they could be suffered to run to such discredit, that twenty-five shillings should have been given to discount one for five days only. If a material change had taken place, the House ought to have heard less tremendous accounts than it had done, and not to have been told that there were near 12,000,000 of navy debt floating in the market since the 25th of last December, and that extraordinaries were to be provided for to the amount of two millions for the army, and four for the navy. Such statements required the assurance of him who stated them. Could the House think that when 2,800,000*l.* of army extraordinaries were to be provided for, a very material change had taken place? He doubted not, that when the next year also came, there would be 4,000,000*l.* of navy debt again to be provided for, and a similar charge for army extraordinaries; and therefore when the noble lord talked of a serious change in these particulars for the better, and asserted that the carelessness and extravagance of late, were not like those of former years, he seemed to be a little inaccurate in his recollection. The report of the commissioners recommended an increase of the estimates of services, to diminish the charges for extraordinaries, and yet, in the last three years only of the war, there was an amount exceeding thirty-one millions, when the whole of the American war amounted to no more than fifteen millions.

His noble friend in the course of his statements had called the attention of the House to the new and extraordinary institution of barracks, which the noble lord denied, affirming that they were erected upon precedent. This mode of referring to precedent, was fatal to the country, inasmuch as it rendered

to subvert the use of it when the use extended too far. The barracks formerly standing in the country were commensurate to the force kept up in it in the time of peace; but the present extension of them afforded a dreadful prospect of our peace establishment. He did not think the noble lord would intentionally make any misstatement to the House, and therefore, he supposed he must have erred in his account of the quantity of men, for whom barracks either were actually building, or were intended to be built, to the difference of 9000 men! The noble lord, however, as well as the whole of the present administration, did not appear to be ashamed to betray his ignorance; for this was not the first time that such instances had happened. The noble lord stated the whole amount of men for whom barracks were erecting, to be 15,000. Could it be imagined he would make that statement to a House of parliament for the purpose of grossly deceiving them? Certainly not. And yet the papers laid upon the table, and signed by General De Lancy, who was deservedly placed at the head of the barrack department, and from whose signature the House had strong reason to believe the accounts authentic, had stated them at 15,799, while another estimate was laid upon the table for barracks to be erected to canton horses, and 9490 men. There was an additional extent, moreover, for the islands of Guernsey and Jersey, to the number of 6000 men; so that the whole amount would be upwards of 31,000, and excluding the islands of Guernsey and Jersey, for Great Britain alone, 24,000. He believed he had given the facts from authentic documents. If the statement of the noble lord had exceeded the statement of the papers on the table, he should then have entertained some doubts of their authenticity, as there might then have been subsequent extension; but he pledged himself to the phrase used by the noble lord, which could not be done away. It was a serious matter for the House to consider that these barracks were not built solely for war, for the convenience of driving horses (as the noble lord had expressed it) from the Land's end, but for the time of peace. He believed however, when peace returned, the good sense of the nation would return with it, and scorn to suffer such an infringement on their liberties and constitution; indeed he should have a contempt for the nation if it actually did not make resistance to it. Even if the barracks were not permanent, ministers would be liable to another accusation, almost equally criminal, viz, the charge of throwing away the public money; the reverse of measures therefore would only change the shape of accusation.

He

He could have said much more upon this, if it had been the only subject? as it was a subject of the utmost importance, and had been enforced with more novelty of doctrine than was ever before used to recommend it. He had heard that one of the arguments used for building barracks was, that it was found necessary to separate the soldiers from the people, because the people were grown so corrupted. He hoped never to hear such an argument again; whoever it might come from, or whoever might encourage such a doctrine, he was free to fortell that it would lead more effectually to the ruin of the country than any other doctrine.

He next came to the consideration of the revival of the office of a third secretary of state. The possession of that office was given to a person whose services might be expected to be the most beneficial to his country; but surely it could not have been given to him for his support of the present administration, because he had previously given that support independent of office. From the insinuation of the noble lord, a contrary conclusion might have been deduced; and he confessed he had a little feeling for the noble person who possessed that office, that he believed so far from desiring it, it must have been disgusting to him, and nothing in his opinion but the public service could have induced him to accept it, after it had been abolished by the dying ghost of his departed friend. The noble lord, in justification of the revival of this office, had said, if two secretaries of state were found necessary for peace, it was but reasonable to imagine that three would be required for war. Now he wanted to know what multiplicity of business it was that demanded this additional application? What new victories we had gained, what new gazettes were published, to shew the utility of this revival. It happens, if the truth of the noble lord's axiom were established, that the pay office must be neglected, as well as the concerns of that vast territory, for whose wealth we were to exchange our patronage, he alluded to India, since the direction of those places were all undertaken by another Secretary of State, his honourable friend. So far the truth of the axiom was a secret, and it would have been well if the noble lord had given his solution, as it then stood, by holding two offices, he had left his honourable friend under an accusation of incapacity for either.

He now came to that appointment which was said to be attended by the most beneficial consequences, he meant the Transport Board. He had formerly heard that the appointment of that Board was intended to be permanent, and since ministers

seemed

seemed to express some doubt of its extinction, he believed that report as faithfully, as if a Bill for making it so were actually upon the table. The noble lord had deduced his arguments for the necessity of this Board, from the experience of the difficulty of obtaining transports in 1782, but if he wished to establish this argument, he ought to have called upon the noble marquis, before the appointment of the Board, as the first evidence for that necessity. Would the appointment of ten transport boards, however, be able to supply the deficiency which the noble marquis had himself complained of? Assuredly not; and accordingly the noble marquis had himself recommended the only plan, which was the building and retaining of so many transports in government service, as might be wanted upon any emergency. In regard to the benefits resulting from the formation of the board, he desired to know whether ministers could shew that contracts had been cheaper, and if they were, how far the saving overbalanced the expence incurred by the salaries of 5000*l.* a year for the commissioners, besides the salaries of clerks, and other expenditures? He desired to know also, what it cost for the hire of East India ships, as transports to the West Indies? Since he had understood that 20*l.* per man had originally been given, that eighteen pence a man per day was given for victualling, after the ships put back so long a time for Portsmouth, and that 40*s* per ton was given for tonnage, until their return to London, so that there was, in fact, a charge of double tonnage. He desired, therefore, to know whether there were ever before such extravagant burdens? If the transport board, however, were not at first quite so careful of expence as might have been expected, the public were at least authorised to expect dispatch. Yet what had been the case? By depriving the ordnance office of providing their own transports as usual, and entrusting that provision to the care of the new transport board, the public was deprived of those advantages which we had every reason to hope and trust would attend the fleet in sailing. He pledged himself to prove this if the papers were given him which he should move for next day.

He stated as a fact which he wished to be contradicted if it could, that the ordnance stores were absolutely delayed for want of transports to convey them, and he doubted not but the letters of Admiral Christian, if they were not kept back, would prove it. If the board were useless, therefore, in time of war, what the use of it in time of peace would be, he could not discover. His noble friend had not brought forward his motion to shew that he had read the commissioners accounts, and

and was conversant in them, but to awaken the House to a sense of its duty, and persuade it to look at the facts in consequence. He did it to shew, that, although the commissioners of accmpts had abolished the board of trade and green cloth, the patronage of the crown in this country had extended. He did it to shew that the office of third secretary, which was formerly abolished, is now again revived, and if the five commissioners of the board of trade were abolished, there were five commissioners appointed to the transport board, to keep the balance equal; and if the board of green cloth was abolished, a board* has been established for the education of young men, and the asylum of old men turned out of office.

When a right honourable friend of his introduced his celebrated India Bill, the present members of administration condemned it on account of the amazing increase of patronage that it would give, and yet they had themselves acted upon the same system in a still more alarming and dangerous degree, 75 officers had been newly created, with a salary at the rate of 700l. a year each, 4,500,000l. had been added to the burdens of the people, with an annual burden of 3,000,000l. of taxes, so that near ten millions of money must be annually drained from the people to defray the exorbitancy of this short war. The taxes themselves too become a source of influence, and every fresh burden is made a mere job for the increase of the revenue.

An honourable friend of his (Mr. Grey), who was accustomed to treat every subject with perspicuity, and a due knowledge of history, had observed, that the people were no longer to look for our boasted constitution, as in theory or in books, the old system was entirely destroyed, and a new one, but of very different materials, created in its stead. To talk of Magna Charta was a farce, and all the liberties from the time of King John were lost in the civil dissensions of this country. The system at the revolution was formed on a mild administration, and the best practical government, and it has been vainly imagined, that from that period our constitution has acquired stability, when, however, in ten years time we have seen the burdens of the people doubled, it is absurd to say the government is stable. The government talks of preserving the liberties of the people at a period when there is no liberty and when the domineering influence of the crown overawes and controuls every thing. If any person doubts this, let him examine facts; but he concluded there was not a man in the House who would put his hand upon his breast, and declare upon his honour that he did not believe these wrongs had not

an

* The Board of Commissioners for the management of Indian affairs.

an actual existence; only the less were governed by their fear or their necessity, and he would call circumstances to shew it. To use a familiar instance, he asked noble lords, whether they had not sometimes found an ingenious mechanic, who depended upon his industry for his support, subscribe to their opinions upon a piece of mechanism, though at the same time he must have known that they knew less of it than he did. So he wanted to know what the implicit confidence given to ministers was, but a respect of the power of property. In the same manner, a man of learning from the university will delicately hint a difference of sentiment, or tamely conform to the sentiments of his superior; and hence arose that thin species of attendance in both Houses of Parliament, hence also arose that apathy throughout the kingdom so similar to the expression of *Cornille* upon *Cardinal Richlieu*.

“*Tout le monde en parle vrai de ce cardinal,*

“*Pour moi, je n'en parle rien,*

“*Il m'a fait trop de bien, pour en parler mal—*

“*Il a fait trop de mal, pour en parler bien.*”

Such reasoning and such want of attendance in both houses of parliament, had induced his noble friend to make this motion, which was designed to court inquiry. If he carried it, it would be the first pride of his life. If he did not, government might resist it and go on; ministers might think that year after year they should be enabled to proceed adding millions to millions, and believe their system to be secure, but it contained the principles of mortality within itself. He desired them, therefore, to consider that they stood upon the verge of that system; he desired them to consider what the nature of the taxes were which they had lately imposed, and that their resources were almost exhausted; he desired them to consider what the situation of the kingdom was, and what was their own situation and exhorted them to have a regard for that fundamental rule of action, and learn where to stop betimes.

Lord Kinnoul in a short speech, declared, that he considered the war just and necessary, for the preservation of civil order, law and religion. He wished the noble lord to review our unparalleled trade, before he declared our resources exhausted, and observed, that if they were exhausted, we could not make too great a sacrifice. In reply to the noble marquis, concerning his observations on the army, he said, if ever there was a time when the army was of consequence, it was at this moment, and the country had been greatly indebted to the volunteer corps for the suppression of tumults.

He begged pardon for intruding, but stated that he merely rose to give his opinions, because he had not had an opportunity to do so before this session.

Lord *Auckland* spoke to the following effect,

MY LORDS,

I came to the house this day, disposed and not unprepared (as far as long practice and experience upon such subjects, with the aid of ample materials and some industry, could prepare me) to enter at large into the discussion of the expences the present war, and of the debts, revenues and resources of the kingdom. I certainly was not singular in supposing that the mass of papers collected upon your table was meant for such a discussion.

The noble marquis however, has thought proper to confine himself for the present, to observations respecting the reduction of certain offices, the mode of paying the army, and the simplifying of loans, the abolition of patent places in the customs, the new barracks, the appointment of a transport board, and a present of money supposed to have been made to the Dey of Algiers.

I would not intentionally undervalue propositions coming from so high a quarter, and liable to be considered as fit objects for the attention of parliament. But surely, my lords, when the points alluded to are compared with the extensive interests and the expectations of the day, I may be permitted, with all due respect to the noble mover, to borrow an expression of his own, and to say, that he has called upon us "to make a great account of small matters."

Be this however as it may; I do not mean to enter into any of the particulars in question. Whether they are matters of charge, or of enquiry, and whatever may be their intrinsic value and importance, they have already been forcibly and fully answered by the noble lord who spoke second in the debate.

The noble marquis closed his speech with a wish, that all discussion of the finances, and of the general situation of the kingdom, might be postponed to a subsequent day. I could have acceded to that intimation readily and without reserve, if the noble marquis had confined his motion to the same limits within which he confined his speech.

But, my lords, there are expressions in that motion by which I feel myself irresistibly impelled to stand forward, and to call for your most serious attention.

It is proposed to us to declare: "That our trade is reduced
"to a dependence on the very warfare which is fundamentally
"destroying it, and has so exhausted our resources as to drive

"us

"us to the wretched expedient of reviving taxes which were a few years since repealed, on the ground of thereby increasing the revenue; an effect which that repeal produced, and a policy which must therefore again be resorted to on the return of peace; and which will consequently bring with it the necessity of finding new taxes, if new and productive taxes can be invented in our then exhausted state.

"That in a situation so alarming, and so manifestly tending to destroy the confidence of the people in parliament," "it behoves parliament by a timely revival of its ancient energy and integrity, to convince the people, &c."

I will not quarrel, my lords, with the exhortation to "a timely revival of your ancient energy and integrity." The deep respect so justly felt towards you by the whole British empire places you in a point of view paramount to such insinuations. I am only concerned that the noble marquis, possessing in so eminent a degree all the powers of language, should have been hurried into the adoption of a phrase, which, on better reflection, he must disapprove.

But, my lords, I strongly and from my heart object to the other expressions, as purporting to convey to the public (and that too without any proof or previous enquiry) a parliamentary declaration, grossly injurious to ourselves, depreciating the national credit, disheartening to the nation, and encouraging to our enemies. I feel it a sacred duty incumbent on me to resist, as far as God has given me faculties to resist, the tendency and mischief of such an impression.

Under the influence of this sentiment, it shall be my endeavour to state our actual situation to your lordships. It would not be my wish, even if I had powers to accomplish it, to lead you into opinions more favourable than the truth will justify: but I am strongly desirous that our situation should be seen as it really is; and I embrace, with earnestness, the occasion of exhibiting it in a fair and full point of view.—In the discharge of a duty so important, I shall abstain from details and minute calculations which might fatigue the attention. If the accuracy of my positions should be doubted, I shall at any time be ready to repeat them, to explain them, and to produce the documents on which they are grounded.

I shall accordingly read to your lordships one of the papers which I had prepared for the expected debate of this day*.

* A Comparative view of certain Public Circumstances in the respective periods of 1783-4 and 1795-6.

Price of the three per cent. Consol.	Jan. 27, 1784	—	55 <i>l</i> .
Ditto.	May 2, 1796	—	66 <i>l</i> .
	2 R 2		Price

"A comparative View of certain public Circumstances in the
"respective Periods of 1783-4 and 1795-6;" submitting
upon

Price India stock,	—	—	Jan. 27, 1784	—	121 <i>l</i> .
Ditto			May 2, 1796	—	209 <i>l</i> .
Total Value of Imports in 1783	—	—			13,325,000 <i>l</i> .
Ditto	in 1795, including Prize Goods to the }				22,175,000 <i>l</i> .
Amount of 907,000 <i>l</i>					
Total Value of Exports in 1783	—	—			14,741,000 <i>l</i> .
Ditto	in 1795				27,278,000 <i>l</i> .
Value of British Manufactures exported in 1783	—	—			10,409,000 <i>l</i> .
Ditto	in 1795				16,526,000 <i>l</i> .
Foreign produce exported in 1783	—	—			4,332,000 <i>l</i> .
Ditto	in 1795				10,743,000 <i>l</i> .
Cotton Wool imported on the average of five years to 1783					
inclusive	—	—	—	—	7,000,000 <i>lbs</i> .
Ditto to 1794 inclusive	—	—	—	—	28,000,000 <i>lbs</i> .
Value of British merchandize exported to the East Indies in 1783					621,921 <i>l</i> .
Ditto			in 1795		2,229 444 <i>l</i> .
Net revenues of the different settlements of the East India Company					
above the charges in	—	—	1783	None.	
Ditto	—	—	1795†		2,000,000 <i>l</i> .
Amount of East India Company's Sales 1783					3,363,800 <i>l</i> .
Ditto			1795		7,718,265 <i>l</i> .
British ships entered inwards, 1783			Vessels.	Tons.	
			7690	812,960	
Ditto			10174	1,262,568	
British ships cleared outwards 1783			Vessels.	Tons.	
			7729	870,270	
Ditto			10133	1,164,970	
				Total	

† This sum was stated at £. 2,600,000. It is now reduced in consequence of a corrected estimate of the net revenues and charges of the Precedencies of Fort William, Fort St. George, and Bombay, for 1795-6, which was laid before the House of Commons on the 6th of May.

upon each article such remarks as I conceive to be material; and mentioning the particulars distinctly, that a note may be taken of them if it should be wished.

This

				Vessels.	Tons,	Men.
Total number of ships belonging to the British empire in	—	—	1789	14,310	1,395,074	108,962
Ditto	—	—	1794	16,802	1,589,162	119,194

Amount of permanent taxes on a three years average to the 5th of January, 1784 — — — 9,876,000*l*.

Amount of the same taxes, after making all allowances for the intermediate changes and arrangements of the revenue, on a three years average to the 5th Jan. 1796 — — — 12,381,000*l*.

Navy debt outstanding and unprovided in December 1783 — — — 15,510,767*l*.

Ditto, 2d May, 1796 — — — 2,300,000*l*.

Bank advances, April 5th, 1783 — — — 11,279,000*l*.

Bank advances, May 2d, 1796 — — — 11,132,000*l*.

Of which last sum provision has actually been made for funding — — — 5,030,000*l*.

6,102,000*l*.

Amount of outstanding debts and demands, and floating and unfunded debt, in January 1784 exclusive of two millions to American sufferers, the debentures for which have since been discharged) — — — 27,000,000*l*.

Ditto, May 2d, 1796 — — — None.

Sinking fund in 1783, — — —

Ditto, May 2d, 1796 — — — 2,400,000*l*.

Amount of the revenue (including the land and malt) below the computed expenditure on a peace establishment of 15 millions in 1783 — — — 2,000,000*l*.

Amount of revenue (including the land and malt) above the computed expenditure on a similar peace establishment, with the addition of increased charges for the debt incurred by the present war in 1795 — — — 3,400,000*l*.

This

This subject has been rendered in some degree familiar not only to your lordships, but to the whole country, by the distinct and numerous statements of the public accounts, which during the last ten years, have been brought forward and printed, with a candour and liberality beyond all example in the history of parliament.

I have selected the year 1783, as having been the first of the last peace; and certainly I take no advantage in comparing with a first year of peace the fourth year of an unfinished war. It is the epoch from which the trade, revenue and resources of this country have risen, gradually and progressively, to their present unparalleled height, without any interruption from the circumstances, magnitude, alarms, and expences of the present war: a war, my lords, far more dangerous than that which we sustained against the united efforts of France, Spain, Holland and North America: a war in which our enemies are entirely exhausting their capital, and expending even the whole value of their soil; and to which they have sacrificed their finance, commerce and population, in the vain hope of finding the means of our ruin.

The first article relates to the public funds:

"The price of the three per cent. consols.

"January 27, 1783, was	—	—	—	—	—	£.55
"Ditto, May 2d, 1796,	—	—	—	—	—	66

Such is the difference of the price of funded property, in favour of the present period, in a country described by the motion to be reduced in trade, exhausted in resources, without confidence in its government, and approaching to public confusion. In the first period (of peace) the price was 55; in the latter period (of war) the price is 66. In contemplating this difference, we shall derive additional satisfaction from recollecting that it has arisen notwithstanding the pressure resulting from an addition of at least 110 millions, which have been funded since the first period, for discharging the out-standing debts of the last war, and for providing for the expences of the present war.

The next article to which I request your lordships attention, is the comparative price of India stock:

"The price of India stock,

"January 27, 1784, was	—	—	—	—	—	100
"Ditto, May 2, 1796,	—	—	—	—	—	209

It is no contradiction to the conclusion which I mean to draw

draw from the difference of those prices, that the dividends of the company have been raised since the first period. If the dividends had not rested on the solid ground of great and increasing prosperity, they would only have contributed, after a certain interval, to depress the stock instead of raising it.

I proceed to the consideration of our imports and exports.

"The total value of imports in 1783, — — — 13,325,000*l*.

"Ditto in 1795 (including prize goods to the amount of 907,000*l*.) 22,175,000*l*.

I admit that the documents which purport to give valuations of our imports and exports are necessarily imperfect, and particularly so with respect to the latter. Still however they are sufficient for the present objects of comparison, being drawn from the same *Lata* equally applied to the different periods meant to be compared. Besides, it is well known that the inaccuracy of those accounts, so far as it prevails, consists chiefly in stating the general bulk of articles below their real value. The effect, therefore, of that inaccuracy, operating here upon the larger quantities, tends to diminish, and not to swell the balance of the valuations which I am opposing to each other.

"The total of exports, in 1783, — — — 14,741,000*l*.

"Ditto in 1795, — — — 27,270,000*l*.

I take the occasion to remark, that this great increase in our export trade has been almost regularly progressive, from 1783, to the present year. But an ignorance of that circumstance, in the minds of some observers, led to strange conjectures, when the valuation of the last year's exports was made public. The supply of cloathing and provisions to our army was assigned as having contributed to swell the account; but those articles were sent in the king's transports, which take no clearances from the custom-houses; and consequently, whatever may have been their value, it formed no part of the total before stated. It was a notion equally ill-founded, that bullion was included. As far as I have been able to analyse the account, I can venture to say, that it is composed of a proportionable increase in the several articles of produce, manufacture, and foreign merchandize, which ordinarily compose our export trade.

And here also I should remark, that the real value of the British manufactures exported, in general greatly exceeds the valuation stated in the Inspector-General's accounts.

Your lordships will have observed in the papers upon your table

table, that the exports to Germany rose last year to the value of eight millions sterling. This alone is a strong instance of our increasing commerce. For though it must happen, for obvious reasons, that in all wars our exports increase to countries in the neighbourhood of the enemy, that circumstance will not account for the great rise in the exports to Germany: the rise is much more than equal to the average annual valuation of our whole export trade, in time of peace, to Holland, Flanders, and France collectively.

I am next to submit to your lordships the most important criterion of our commercial prosperity; I mean the comparative exports of British manufactures, and also of foreign produce.

" Value of British manufactures exported in 1783	10,409,000l.
" Ditto in 1795,	16,526,000l.

Here then we find, in the last year (a period of war), compared with 1783 (a period of peace), an increase, to the amount of six millions sterling, in the exports of British manufactures; and this from a country stated, in the motion, to be exhausted in its resources, and driven to "wretched expedients!"

" Foreign produce exported in 1783,	4,332,000l.
" Ditto in 1795,	10,743 000l.

Here also we see an increase to the amount of six millions sterling. I admit that it may have resulted in part from the ruin of the commerce of our enemies, and from the possessions of which we have deprived them; but it is not the less an instance of our comparative prosperity.

In the increase of our imports we find a remarkable proof of the flourishing state of a principal manufacture:

" Cotton wool imported on the average of five years in 1783	7,000,000lbs.
" Ditto ——— in 1795	28,000,000lbs.

And here it should be observed, that though our cotton manufactures have made and are making so rapid a progress, it appears by the most satisfactory evidence, both from the interior of the kingdom, and from the Custom-house, that the woollen, iron, pottery and other principal trades, are greatly increased, for the purposes both of home consumption and of exportation; and that the silk manufactory, which it has been apprehended might be annihilated by its rival, the cotton, has not fallen off.

" In 1783, the raw silk exported was	675,000lbs.
" In 1794, it was	683,000lbs.

Our

Our importation of thrown silk has in like manner had a small increase. Its annual amount, after deducting the quantity exported, is on the average of the last five years about 381,000lbs.

I proceed to another article of comparison which I bring forwards with peculiar satisfaction, as connecting the prosperity and increase of our manufactures, with the prosperity and increase of those immense possessions in the east, to which every day is adding some new security and some new and permanent extension.

"Value of British merchandize exported to the East Indies in 1783, 621,921l.

"Ditto in 1795, ————— 2,229,444l.

I am led by the subject last mentioned to state, in the next place, the net revenues of the East India Company above the charges.

Having been the chairman of the committee appointed to inquire into the affairs of the East India Company in 1794, I may be allowed to say, with some degree of confidence, that at that period the company possessed no net revenue above the charges; on the contrary, that the charges exceeded the revenue. At present, by a system of accounts annually laid before parliament, the accurate statement of which is fully established by the experience of several years;

"The net revenues of the different settlements of the East India

Company amounted in 1795 to about ————— 2,000,000l.

"The amount of sales for East India Company's goods for 1783, was 3,363,800l.

"Ditto for 1795, ————— 7,718,265l.

I must now, my lords, request your attention to the prosperous statements of our navigation, which I have to lay before you.

"Total number of British ships which entered inwards at the ports of Great Britain, or cleared outwards."

INWARDS.		OUTWARDS.	
Vessels.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.
1783, ————— 7,690	812,960	7,729	870,270
1795, ————— 10,174	1,262,568	10,133	1,164,910

Though the increase in the number of British ships is here so large, yet it will occur to all who hear me, that it would have been still larger, if the circumstances of the war had not required a considerable proportion of merchant ships to be employed in the transport service, and compelled us, to a certain extent, to make a temporary use of foreign bottoms.

The progressive increase of our mercantile shipping, may be more clearly shewn by the accounts which have been kept under the Register Act, best known by the name of the noble

lord who introduced it. As that act was not in full effect till the year 1789, I cannot carry the comparison to an earlier period. But here let it be remarked, that in 1789 we were indisputably in a state of high prosperity and of peace; and yet since that period, if we extend our views to the whole of the British empire, we shall find that our increase, both in shipping and tonnage, has been in the proportion of about sixteen to fourteen.

“ Total number of vessels belonging to the British empire.

	<i>Vessels.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>Men.</i>
“ 1739	14,310	1,395,074	108,962
“ 1794	16,802	1,589,162	119,194

I now come to a general comparative statement of our finances at the respective periods in question, beginning with the amount of the permanent taxes :

“ Amount of permanent taxes on a three years average to 5th January 1784	9,876,000l.
“ Amount of the same taxes, after making allowances, as far as they can be calculated, for the intermediate changes and arrangements of the revenue; and also by taxes imposed in 1784, 1785, 1786, and 1789; as well as for the profit gained by the consolidation of the customs and excise duties; on a three years average to the 5th January 1796,	12,381,009l.

Exhibiting, amidst the failure of resources, and the disastrous circumstances ascribed to us by the motion on the table, an increase of nearly one fourth in the actual produce of the identical taxes of 1783, to many of which the weight of new imposts has since been added.

The next object is the amount of the unfunded debt.

“ Navy debt outstanding and unprovided in December 1783	15,510,767
---	------------

(If taken in December 1782, when the noble marquis was at the head of the Treasury, it was 14,207,414l.)

“ Navy debt outstanding and unprovided on 2d May 1796, only 2,300,000l. being little more than the floating navy debt in 1791, a period of acknowledged prosperity and profound peace. I would not be understood here to conceal that there existed in last December a navy debt to the amount of near 11,000,000l. which was not funded; but, for a large proportion of it, taxes had even then been provided. The recent discharge of a part of that debt for the purpose of facilitating public credit, is at once a proof of our resources, and of the wisdom and energy which have distinguished parliament in all the exigencies of the present war.

The

The next account which I shall mention to your lordships will be that of the Bank advances, in order to shew that the idea of our being aided by extraordinary anticipations is without foundation :

Bank advances, April 5th, 1783,	11,279,000l.
Do. May 2d, 1796,	11,132,000l.
Of which last sum provision has actually been made for funding	5,030,000l.
	6,102,000l.

A further striking contrast of public circumstances in the periods compared will be seen in the following statement :

Amount of outstanding demands and floating and unfunded debt in Jan. 1784 (exclusive of two millions to American sufferers, the debentures for which have been annually paying off, and will this year be discharged within 80,000l.)	27,000,000l.
---	--------------

I have no sum to place in opposition to this amount of twenty-seven millions sterling. Estimating the debts actually outstanding, and throwing into the opposite scale the whole supplies for which taxes are already found, I may state that certainly there is no out-standing balance of debt unprovided for at this day ; such and so efficient have been the measures adopted and pursued for preventing an accumulation of unfunded debt ! If, indeed, the estimate were extended to January 1797, the conjecture would be utterly uncertain. The result must depend upon the extent of the navy debt, and of the extraordinaries of the army to be incurred in the course of the present year ; and it is possible that the outstanding debt might then amount to six or seven millions.

Adverting to the sinking fund I have nothing to state under that head in 1783. There did not then exist the means of a sinking fund. On the contrary, there was a deficiency of revenue, to the amount of at least 2,000,000l. below the peace establishment, supposing it to have amounted to fifteen millions.

The amount of permanent taxes for the year 1783, was	10,194,000l.
Allowed for a further estimated produce of the taxes imposed in 1782 and 1783,	256,000l.
Land and malt,	2,550,000
Wanting to complete the supposed amount of the peace establishment,	2,000,000l.
	15,000,000l.

Very different is the statement for the 2d May, 1796. At this day the sinking fund is above 2,400,000*l.* (without taking credit for 200,000*l.* annually voted in addition.)

And I am prepared to shew, whenever a proper occasion may arise, that, exclusive of so large a sinking fund, which is hourly augmenting itself, there is, by the actual established taxes, even under the absurd supposition that they will not be more productive in peace than they are in war, such a balance of revenue as, together with the aid to be expected from the East-India participation and the lottery, will furnish one million annually, beyond the peace establishment above stated of 15,000,000*l.* over and above the interest for the additional debt incurred by the present war.

If it should be objected, that the future peace establishment would necessarily exceed the supposed amount; still the surplus which I have stated would be applicable to it, in the whole or in part, without any interruption to the progress making in the discharge of the debt.

I am aware that the necessity of an enlarged peace establishment may arise; but on the other hand the favourable contingencies of peace may be expected to give a proportionable increase of revenue. In a word, my lords, if my computation is accurate, there will remain a surplus of 1,000,000*l.* (beyond the sinking fund and its growing produce,) over and above all charges, applicable to such services as our position on the return of peace may make expedient.

With respect to the sinking fund, your lordships will recollect that the annual million, set apart in 1786, is to be invariably applied to the reduction of the debt, till the accumulation, with other accessions and expiring annuities, shall amount to 4000,000*l.* a year; from which period there will revert annually to the disposal of parliament, taxes equal to the interest of whatever part of the national debt may be repurchased by the application of four millions a year. Your lordships are farther aware that the other branch of the sinking fund was established in 1792; in consequence of which, an addition of one per cent. of the capital is now provided, for the gradual discharge of every new debt created. In other words, a most salutary system has been introduced, by which the increase of revenue is required to be greater than the charge of interest to be paid for new loans; and that increase, at the rate of the loans made in the present war, has amounted to about one-sixth of the whole charge. Thus it is that 750,000*l.* a year of the taxes voted in this war are applicable not to the expence of the war, but to the reduction of the new debt incurred; which will discharge

discharge the whole of that new debt (estimating the rate of money at four per cent.) within a period of forty-one years, when a farther disposable income of 4,500,000*l.* a year will revert to the public.

About nineteen millions of capital are now redeemed by the operation of the sinking fund set apart in 1786. Six millions more will be redeemed in about three years, and the five per cents will then be redeemable. The reduction already made is more than three times as great as the whole reduction that was effected in the period of peace between 1763, and 1775. (And that reduction is exclusive of the expence of the Spanish armament in 1790, to the amount of 1,830,000*l.* which has been defrayed by a separate provision.) It is an important result of this system, that the whole of the perpetual annuities are in effect converted into annuities for terms of years, varying as to the course of redemption from fifty-four to thirty-nine years; and it is found in the progress of this operation, that the daily and increasing payments for the capital redeemed, have the most beneficial effects in money transactions and upon public credit.

I abstain from entering into a consideration of the expences occasioned by this war comparatively with former wars, or of the productiveness of the taxes, or of their tendency to bear more or less heavily on the bulk of the people. I shall be ready to discuss these subjects at a proper time: not, however, as an advocate for war: the noble marquis cannot see the inconveniences and difficulties of so extensive a war as the present, with more concern than I do. But I see also the necessity of that war; and therefore I derive great consolation from the sense and conviction which I entertain of our ability to support it. And surely it is most important not only to appreciate fairly our own strength and resources, but to shew that we may look forward with a well-founded confidence to the farther use of that strength and of those resources, if the perverseness of the enemy should make it expedient for us to employ them.

I shall close this comparative account by a striking and important statement.

" Amount of revenue (including the land and malt) <i>below</i> the com-	
" puted expenditure on a peace establishment of 15 millions 1783,	2,000,000 <i>l.</i>
" Ditto <i>above</i> the computed expenditure on a similar peace esta-	
" blishment, with the addition of increased charges for the debt	
" incurred by the present war 1795,	3,400,000 <i>l.</i>
If we compare the excess of 1796 (3,400,000 <i>l.</i>) with the deficiency of 1783	
(2,000,000 <i>l.</i>) the difference of revenue in favour of the latter period will be	
5,400,000 <i>l.</i>	

Your

Your lordships cannot fail to have remarked, that all these objects converge in a remarkable manner towards the same conclusion: the coincidence is an irrefragable proof that they all spring from the same source, the real prosperity of the country. If there is any inaccuracy in my statements, I am persuaded it is inconsiderable, and certainly it is not intentional.

Facts, such as these, my lords, greatly outweigh all the declamations that the genius and eloquence of mankind can produce. I shall leave them therefore without comment; they sufficiently enforce themselves. They are unequivocal proofs of the resources of the kingdom; no man can look with an unprejudiced eye at such statements, and not perceive that this country has increased in prosperity even under the pressure of the war.

To what, under the protection and favour of Divine Providence, shall such prosperity be ascribed? To our naval superiority and successes; to our conquests in the East and West-Indies; to the acquisition of new markets; to the enterprising spirit of our merchants; to the improvements of our manufactures; to the energy of our countrymen in arts and in arms; to the union of liberty with law; to the national character cherished by, and cherishing, the principles of our inimitable constitution; that constitution, which it has been the object of our enemies to destroy, by means and efforts utterly destructive to themselves; that constitution which it is the great purpose of our struggles, in this just and necessary war to preserve and to maintain.

The Earl of Moira said, that having looked to the papers on the table which had made a serious impression on his mind, he was not a little surprized on hearing the flourishing statement of the resources, trade, and commerce of the country, that had been made by a noble lord. Though he should certainly give his support to the motion for an inquiry brought forward by the noble marquis, he wished the finance part of the question, which he thought extremely important, was then before their lordships, but whenever it came, he pledged himself to enter into it, and flattered himself that he should be able to present them with a very different picture upon the subject, and to prove that the noble lord's statement was erroneous and inaccurate. He was one of those elder brothers alluded to by the noble marquis, who looking forward to great professions, were drawn by the drum in early life from the multiplication table. He never theless thought the resources of the country equally interested the soldier and the citizen; therefore though he might risque the ridicule of noble lords, in recurring to his multiplication

table

able to prove, by fair statements, incontrovertible facts of the misapplication of public money, he would undertake the task. Could noble lords take upon them to contrast the close of the American war and the present time; and infer from thence that the state of the country now was more flourishing than it was then? Since that period, many heavy taxes, and taxes grievous to be born, had been laid on; nor were they paid without difficulty and discontent; besides, the first period was at the end of a very expensive war of eight years, and the present was only in the fourth year of a war, which he would indeed allow was expensive; yet he still did not think the comparison fair. Or would it be contended ministers then violated the privileges of the constitution more? Surely not: they could not; and this he would engage to prove by contrasting the two periods together. He should not then go into the necessary details, but hoped the noble marquis would mention an early day for inquiry; he wished it very early, before noble lords left town, he did not mean for election purposes but for their pleasure, that there might be a full attendance to give the subject all the discussion it demanded. On that day, were a day named, he would come forward and shew, by statements, that could not be denied, that there was a flagrant misapplication of the money of the publick, and an open violation of the principles of the constitution.

Earl Spencer did not mean to detain noble lords at that late hour by any length of argument; he rose merely to advert to a few points which had been unfairly pressed by the noble marquis. The noble marquis considered the creation of the transport board merely as an additional expence, and no advantage to the public; he took the liberty, however, to differ widely from him on that subject. By having a department the time and attention of which was entirely engaged in the transport business, it was more likely that it should be well conducted, than without any separate office of that kind. Nor was this merely matter of opinion: the good effects of their exertions had been experienced, and much was to be expected from their future operations. It was true that the department had been augmented; it consisted originally of three commissioners and in truth on the business of the transports, it consisted of no more at present. It had been thought advisable to relieve the Sick and Hurt Board from the care of the prisoners of war, and two additional commissioners, had been placed at the Board of transports for that particular service. This addition however reprobated had its uses; much expedition and dispatch in business had been acquired to the navy,

navy, and more immediately to the transport service. From the vigorous measures resorted to, and carried into effect, by the means of that additional board; the public service he could confidently assert, had derived most essential advantage.

Another point he wished particularly to call the attention of the house to, was the state of the transports, which, though the noble marquis thought much more expensive now than in the American war, was not the case. The noble marquis had stated difficulties which he found himself with respect to transports, and it was undoubtedly of the utmost consequence that the service should be regularly performed. In the beginning of the American war, transports were had at the charge of 10s a ton, and the expence towards the clove amounted to 13s. a ton, together with a premium to the owners, at the expence of government. In the present war, transports never exceeded 13s. a ton, and from the arrangements made could not be so expensive as formerly to government.

The bargain for the East India ships he owned had been at a high price, but their lordships would consider the nature of their trade; that they were taken from a most lucrative commerce, and taken on the spur of the moment. Their single demurage was undoubtedly high, and though they had a clause for double demurage, it was almost impossible it would ever be to be paid. It was only in case of their being employed in a second service after the first was completed, which certainly would not happen. As to the Transport Board, it might be found expedient, in time of peace, to discharge the office, or it might appear adviseable to retain them from their services. The noble earl had talked of a peace establishment; and argued, because there were barracks erected for fifteen thousand men, and barracks intended for nine thousand more, that there would be an actual peace establishment of forty thousand men. Did it follow that there would be a peace establishment of forty thousand men, because it was found expedient to have barracks for twenty-thousand additional troops in time of war? Would not the subject be always under the eye and control of parliament, with whom it would rest to fix on any particular establishment which the circumstances of the times might require?

One thing more that he wished to speak to. The acceptance of the office of third secretary of state by a noble duke, his friend, had been animadverted on as contrary to the spirit of a measure which he had himself supported. He could only say for that noble duke as well as himself, that when circumstances in their opinion demanded, that government should

should be strenuously supported, they had come forward, they had given them their support without being in office; and he assured the noble earl, that neither the noble duke nor he himself had been purchased by a place; the sweets of office had no temptation to him. On the contrary, it was a burden which he only consented to bear, because it was thought necessary that the noble persons with whom it was his pride to act, could render more service by accepting the situations to which his majesty was pleased to call them. For himself, he never was either eager or covetous of office.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, that in ascribing to him the situation of either the noble duke or the noble earl having been purchased by a place, the noble earl had strained the line of his argument. He had asserted that the noble duke had not thought it inconsistent with his delicacy to accept of an office which it had been a memorable measure of his life to assist in abolishing as useless. As to the noble earl's claim to superior independence, which he delighted so much to set up, it would at least be modest to wait until the charge of eagerness for office was urged against him. He supposed the noble earl was much like other men in respect to the love of a place. He had long acted with the noble earl; he pretended for his own part to no more disinterestedness than fell to the share of common flesh and blood; but certainly it had so happened, that at one period of their lives when they acted together, the noble earl who affected such disregard for office, had taken care to be in a place when he (Lord L.) never had even aspired to a public situation. He entreated the noble earl then to postpone his professions of peculiar and superior disinterestedness until he should be accused of the contrary disposition.

Earl Spencer said, he made no claim of superior disinterestedness.

Lord Hawkesbury declared, he desired only to say a few words, and did not mean to trouble their lordships at that time of the night with any length of discussion. He wished merely call their attention to the unfairness of a noble earl (*Lord Lauderdale*), who argued that the national spirit was debased, because the people freely admitted the burdens, which necessarily were owing to a just and unavoidable war. He was induced to draw an inference diametrically opposite—if the people willingly agreed to the measures of government in the maintenance of the war, the natural fair inference was, that they were convinced of its justice and necessity, and in consequence determined to support it with vigour and alacrity. He was aware that his noble friend the noble secretary had not exag-

gerated when he stated that our finances were flourishing and our resources inexhausted. He wished for an inquiry, and why? Because he was convinced that he could establish, by fair documents, that the noble secretary was not mistaken in his assertions of the state of the nation in any respect whatsoever—because the people would see by the inquiry their real and true circumstances.

The Lord Chancellor said, that a conduct not very common had been pursued that day. The noble marquis had called for a number of papers, and after a very long speech, he had not thought proper to found any resolution upon them; but had moved a proposition almost totally unsupported, and even unconnected with the papers on the table.

The Marquis of Lansdown said, it would save the noble and learned lord some time to shew him his error in the outset. He had made a positive proposition upon the reports of the commissioners of the public accounts, and he had avoided entering upon the state of finances, meaning that should be the subject of one day's distinct discussion.

The Lord Chancellor proceeded to analyze and comment on the motion, sentence by sentence and part by part. He said it was true the noble marquis had put his observations on the reports of the commissioners of public accounts into the shape of a proposition, stating that measures had not been taken to establish those reforms which they had recommended; could the noble marquis, however, expect that this proposition should be entertained? Very considerable progress had undoubtedly been made to carry into effect the reforms they had suggested. Their objects were, a reform of the public offices—a reform in the manner of keeping the public accounts, and particularly of checking the extraordinaries. A recommendation to come to some more certain plan and speedy course of auditing the public accounts—and a recommendation to lessen the number of useless and inconvenient offices. These were the leading objects in the reports of the commissioners, and would any man possessed of an ordinary share of information, venture to assert, that all these had been neglected? Was it not matter of notoriety that the army pay office had been reformed: so had the navy office. A general system of improvement had been introduced into the manner of keeping the public accounts, so as to insure a more correct and speedy audit; and in the measures for forcing the public accountants to this audit, a very considerable sum of money that was owing and remained in the hands of different accountants and sub-accountants, had been acquired by the public. He thought it then

rather

rather a bold step to call upon them to say, that nothing had been done upon these reports. The next part of the noble lord's motion was put in the shape of interrogatory. Whether any new offices had been created? This was put in so vague a way, that it indicated a desire rather to raise suspicions than to give information. Why not state the instances, if any instances there were; and not put it in the shape of a vague surmise? With respect to the extraordinaries, ministers had done no more than pursued the established practice of the last fifty years, and of which the jealousy of parliament had never found reason to complain. The part of the proposition which asserted that our commerce depended upon the warfare which threatened it with ruin, he could not comprehend. He did not know any part of our trade, which owed its temporary success to the war, except perhaps our trade in cotton, the circumstances of Europe having brought it all to England; as to our trade in general, it was easy to prove, that its success was in no way connected with the war. Of our woollen trade he could speak in particular. During the average of the three years of war, it had been carried to an excess above the same average of three years during the best period of peace that this country had ever known. Take the taxes of corresponding periods, and look at the state of our revenue. He meant to look at the produce of the same identical taxes at different periods. The noble lord on the cross bench, (Lord Auckland) had shewn that in his comparison, the last year was more flourishing than the year 1783. After this were the house to be called upon to say that the resources were exhausted, the trade depending upon the war, and the confidence of the people in the energy and integrity of parliament diminished. Did their lordships feel that their energy was weakened, their integrity blemished; or that they possessed in a smaller degree the confidence of the people? Or would they say that the resources of the nation were exhausted, just when an incident had occurred that would give splendour to our finances in the eyes of every part of Europe, he meant the unprecedented measure of providing for the unfunded debt, in the midst of an expensive war, instead of leaving it, as it had always been left, to be funded at the peace. Lord Lauderdale having two or three times said *hear, hear*, during this latter part of the noble and learned lord's speech, he said, he spoke to be heard; the noble earl might cry *hear, hear*, though he did not consider it as the most decorous way of giving attention. He was not so much accustomed as the noble earl to attend in societies, where it was the practice to cheer a speaker, (the Earl of Carlisle cried *hear, hear*.)

bear.) and he wished that his noble friends would abstain from it, even in the pleasurable way of applause.

The Earl of Lauderdale assured the noble and learned lord, that it was far from his design to interrupt him. It would be very bad taste, for a person so much in the habit of speaking as he was, to introduce a practice that might be so successfully exerted against himself. The phrase of *bear, bear*, they all knew was a parliamentary mode of expressing either approbation or disapprobation, and he had recurred to it merely to draw the attention of noble lords to the expressions which he thought particularly deserving of their notice. The noble and learned lord said, that he was not in the habit of attending assemblies where it was the practice to cheer a speaker with applause. He should have said that he was not lately in the habit, for surely the time had been, when the noble and learned lord took particular delight in the applause of popular assemblies. Of all men breathing he ought to be the last to affect dislike at this sort of luxury, he who had sed, and even wallowed in it with delight. The noble and learned lord would not forget his appearance and exploits at the York meeting and elsewhere. A man who had through his political life pursued a broad, straitforward, and direct road, would seldom perhaps have occasion to recur to his memory. His measures being uniform, and his course simple, he would not be called upon often to advert to particular periods; but he who had travelled a crooked, winding, devious path, ought at least to be furnished with an accurate recollection. It was the most inconvenient and awkward thing in the world for such a man to have a treacherous memory. It betrayed him into embarrassments, from which his wit could not always rescue him.

The Lord Chancellor replied, that he should rest satisfied in the consciousness that his life had been a very public one; that his conduct therefore was very generally known to the world. He had endeavoured to fulfil his duty, and his memory had never given any disturbance to his conscience. That sense of duty which had actuated him through life, did not dictate to him the necessity of taking any other notice of the observation of the noble earl.

The Marquis of Lansdown, in reply to the arguments that had been used, said, that he had taken the course on this day which he had pursued, in the firm conviction that, unless their lordship did manfully resist the torrent of expence, influence and abuse which pervaded every part of the public service, it would be impossible for the country to avert the horrors of bankruptcy.

ruptcy. He had not changed his sentiments on account of any thing he had heard that night, neither from the noble secretary of state, from whom he differed in most of his statements, from the noble and learned lord on the woolsack, or from any noble lord. He had asserted that hardly any thing had been done to carry into effect the reforms proposed by the commissioners, and that accordingly the public accounts were in the same state of inexplicable confusion, mystery and abuse as ever; by which every species of extravagance, or even of corruption, might be practised without the probability of detection; and by which the nation was daily sinking deeper and deeper in debt and burthens. He had drawn the attention of their lordships to the facts; he had shewn the monstrous latitude which ministers took in the shameful practice of extraordinaries, of navy debt, and of votes of credit, by which such enormous sums were expended without estimate, and without the control of parliament, and under which any possible corruption could be concealed, and set at defiance the scrutiny and the correction of their lordships. In his opinion their interests, even their permanent interests as land-owners, independent of their duty as legislators, called upon them to check this evil, and he was convinced that integrity would be their most political, as well as their most honourable virtue. In this view he had moved for the papers; and with this view he still pressed, and entreated their lordships individually to examine them; and he pledged himself that afterwards no one lord would feel inclined to say upon his honour that the subject was not most seriously alarming. The noble and learned lord, asked if no reforms had taken place? He knew as well as the noble and learned lord of the reforms in the pay offices; men were not apt to forget their own merit, and he had taken part in the pay-office reform Bill. With regard to the transport board, 300*l.* a year additional salary was formerly allowed to the commissioners of the navy for taking care of the transport service, and that 300*l.* he understood they still kept now that the business was in other hands. A noble earl (lord Spencer) had said, that there were three commissioners first appointed for superintending the transport service, and two others afterwards for prisoners. Why the three former could not manage the business of the two latter he could not discover, nor was he convinced of the great efficacy of either. He was accused also of not having brought instances of the new places which had been created, and of stating his charges vaguely. He had avoided the ungracious course of individious detail, but he could have enumerated a host of new places, the names of which,

which, even, were never known before; such as surveyors of all kinds of places, of Somerset-house, of the Guards, of Windsor, &c. a printer of the Hue and Cry, &c. &c. He questioned whether it was legal to create new patent places; perhaps the time might come when a parliament might impeach a chancellor for putting the great seal to them. He was afraid, however, that nothing which he could say would rouse them to take a decisive part upon the occasion. He despaired of an enquiry being made with vigour; but at any rate it was fit that the public should know the state in which we were, and the blind, dark course in which we were hurrying to ruin. The noble and learned lord said, he could not see how our trade was for the time connected with the war. It was, however, extremely simple. The war had affected the manufactures of almost every part of Europe. France, Poland, almost all Germany and Holland had ceased for the time to manufacture and trade, and for the time being we had engrossed the commerce of the whole; even France was clothed by England. But by the war, at the same time, the price of manufacture and the burdens on commerce would be made so enormous as to be fatal to its existence. The noble lord on the cross-bench had read a paper of comparative statements, to shew our present opulence. Why did he not state the sum we had paid last year for discounts on exchequer paper, as a part of our prosperity? The thing was unprecedented. We had paid 15,000l. for discounts only in 1795. He said he had avoided going into the finance that day, because a gentleman in another place, who would one day contribute to their restoration, was to take up the business; and because a noble earl, his friend, was to bring it before their lordships. When he did so, though he might not be able to be present, his efforts would have his most hearty concurrence.

The Earl of Lauderdale rose once more to give notice, that he would on Tuesday next call their lordships' attention to the state of the finances, and bring forward certain resolutions grounded on the papers on the table; at which time he should animadvert on the statements read by a noble lord, in which he had said that reckoning our future peace establishment at 15,000,000l. there would be a surplus of 3,600,000l. of annual revenue. He would pledge himself to prove that so far was this from being the case, a very dark and gloomy deficiency would be found. With respect to our peace establishment being at 15,000,000l. he referred their lordships to the reports of the committees of the House of Commons in 1786 and 1791, on that subject, and could only say that the committee of

of 1791, had merely given us the hopes of its being 16,900,000*l.* and that experience had shewn the late peace establishment to have been 16,800,000*l.* For his own part he was afraid it would never be less, but on the contrary much more. All this, however, he would leave for the proper time.

The House then divided,

Contents	-	-	-	9
Proxies	-	-	-	3
				12
Non-Contents	-	-	-	72
Proxies	-	-	-	32
				104
Majority				92

The Earl of Lauderdale moved that the lords be summoned to attend on Tuesday.

The Earl of Guildford gave notice, that on Monday next he would bring forward a motion upon the state of the nation, and also moved that the House be summoned.

Adourned at half past twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, May 2.

A writ was ordered to be issued for the election of a member for the borough of Northampton, in the room of Charles lord Compton, lately called up to the House of Peers.

Pawnbrokers, Salt office, Sharring inclosure, and Ellesmere canal bills were read a third time and passed.

LONDON MILITIA.

The London Militia bill was read a third time and passed.

ALIEN BILL.

The Attorney General moved for leave to bring in a Bill for a continuance for a time to be limited of the 33d of George III. respecting aliens.—Leave given.

MILITIA.

The Solicitor General moved for leave to bring in a Bill, to explain and amend chapters 8th and 9th of the 33d of George III. respecting the providing of substitutes to serve in the militia.—Granted.

The reports of the committee of supply, and of the committee of ways and means, were received, the resolutions read and

and agreed to, and Bills ordered to be brought in pursuant to the same.

LONGITUDE.

Sir Philip Stevens brought up the report of the committee, by which 5000*l.* were voted to be employed for the encouragement of those who shall make improvements in finding the longitude. The resolution was read, agreed to, and a Bill was ordered to be brought in in pursuance of it.

GAME LAWS.

Mr. Curwen rose to call the attention of gentlemen to the subject of the game laws. Though they rejected what he brought before them in another shape, he hoped they would have no objection to the motion he was then about to make. He meant merely to repeal the obnoxious parts of the three acts he had alluded to on a former night, namely, the 8th of George I. the 26th of George II. and the second of George III. He had before stated the grievances resulting from these acts, and should not then press the matter farther than by moving for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal them.

Sir Richard Sutton desired to explain what he said on a former day relative to poachers. He meant that severity should be directed only against night poachers. He was one of the last persons in this country who would prosecute the lower class of the people for pursuing game sometimes. He was also entirely against prohibiting farmers the sport of following game occasionally, especially if they had any thing like a decent subsistence to live upon. He thought it would be improper to prosecute such persons for killing game, even though they should not be qualified to do so by law; but with regard to any measure, as perhaps this now proposed would be, tending to favour poachers, he was entirely against and should oppose it: poachers were a class of persons much too insolent already.

Mr. Jolliffe said he had heard of no complaint brought by any body of men against the game laws as they at present stood; he therefore did not see upon what grounds they should be repealed. He hoped the motion would be deferred till its propriety and necessity were more maturely examined, and more clearly ascertained.

Mr. Buxton said there was no greater enemy to the game laws than himself: but he did not wish that the subject should be brought forward at present.

The Solicitor General objected to the motion. After a good deal of consideration of that subject, he declared he was of opinion

opinion that the game laws, as they stood, were better for this country at large than, perhaps, any thing that could be adopted instead of them. He had, he said, formed something like the same opinion of the forest laws, although he knew that both had been reprobated; perhaps, however, for want of due consideration.

Mr. *Curwen* said a few words in reply; after which the question was put and negatived.

COLONEL CAWTHORNE.

General Smith having moved the order of the day for the consideration of the proceedings of the court martial on John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. moved, "That the proceedings of the court martial, that had tried and passed sentence on John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. a copy of which was now on the table of the House, be now read." They being read accordingly,

The Speaker informed Colonel Cawthorne, that if he had anything to offer in his justification, it was now the moment to undertake it. Upon which,

Colonel Cawthorne rose and from a written paper thus addressed the speaker:

"Sir, under the distressful perturbation in which I rise in this most awful moment of my life, I am too sensible of the candour and humanity of the House to think it necessary for me formally to implore for myself, that indulgence which it will always, in its justice, shew to every one of its members, when called upon to justify or excuse himself. Proud and happy, sir, as I have hitherto been, in the enjoyment of a seat within these walls, no consideration whatsoever would have induced me to come hither to-day, had I not received the commands of the House to attend here in my place. I would not, sir, have quitted the confinement I had imposed upon myself, as a proof of my profound submission to the judgment of a court martial, composed of honourable men, although I was at the same time convinced that they had been so far frustrated in their research for truth, by the intricacy and confusion in which it was involved, as to prevent my being able to convince them, that in the instances in which I may have deviated from the rigid line of military order, I erred rather from defect of judgment, which I do not stand up to justify, or from the fallibility of inexperience, of which I was not then aware; but I most solemnly protest I never acted with an intention to injure any man, or upon any fraudulent or corrupt motive whatsoever, and I venture to assert, that no legal proof has been, or, I trust,

can be brought before the House, of my having acted frudulently or corruptly. And surely, sir, though there can be no doubt but that the court martial have proceeded with the purest intention, and with the most undeniable desire of making an upright judgment, they may in a case so complicated and so voluminous as that upon your table, have been deceived.— Might not irregularity have been mistaken for fraud, and the receipt of money not at any given time wholly expended, for misapplication, corruption, and embezzlement? In reality they were so, for in every instance to which the terms of fraud, misapplication, corruption, and embezzlement, are annexed to the opinions of the court martial, without positive evidence to support them, were I even to admit that the facts of irregularity complained of, and of money not expended at certain given times have been proved, I will venture to assert that the inferences drawn therefrom of fraud, misapplication, corruption, and embezzlement, are erroneous. I trust therefore that the House will not look upon me in the light of having so suddenly deviated from the character, which previous to my being thus charged, I trust stood unimpeached. May I not be justified in alledging, that the prosecutor could not affix to any act of mine the appellation of any specific offence; because after having searched through the mutiny act, in order to find the name of an offence which he could give to any thing I had done or omitted, he was under a necessity of pressing into his charges out of the articles of war, the words, “in a scandalous and infamous manner, unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman.” Sir, being again become a private member of civil society, I am too sensible of the respectability of those noblemen and gentlemen who sat as my judges, and of the importance of courts martial in general to the public safety, to harbour a thought, or to utter a word that could have the remotest tendency towards shaking the general estimation, in which I hope and trust they will ever be held by all ranks of people, as a highly honourable, and indispensibly necessary tribunal. But I hope, nevertheless, that the whole influence of military law will be entirely confined to military offences, and limited to military tribunals; for, sir, I cannot omit observing, that lately I was called upon before a court martial, not only to answer for my conduct as a colonel of a regiment, but to be responsible for acts done by me as deputy lieutenant, and so charged and made amenable to a military tribunal for offences of a civil nature, although I had entered a formal and solemn protest against such proceedings.

“To-day

"To-day I am called upon before the House of Commons to attend in my place, to answer for acts done by me as a colonel of a regiment, and thus charged and made amenable in this high civil tribunal, for offences of a military nature. But, sir, from a consciousness of never having acted from corrupt motives, and a confidence in the unprejudiced investigation of this honourable House, it is the anxious wish of my heart to be tried by you conformably to the usual course of your proceedings in all cases of trial, having no doubt that under the scrutiny of your awful inquiry, I should receive a determination that would heal my wounded character, and re-establish my moral and social reputation. I am sure, sir, the House of Commons will never consider itself as a supplementary court, for the purpose of receiving and registering the sentence of courts martial for the government of their proceedings upon one of its own members, nor deem it consistent with its dignity and justice, to see with their eyes, and to hear with their ears, the competency of evidence received by virtue of military laws.— Nor will this House, I humbly apprehend, consider the proceedings of a court martial as a sufficiently legal proof for them to decide upon the guilt or innocence of one of its members. Presuming, therefore, that the House only calls upon me to efface the impression of those epithets which tend to fix a stigma on my moral character, and to shew, that through the various charges, the language of the articles of war before mentioned, does not necessarily attach on my conduct.

"I beg leave to call the attention of the House to the main criminating point of the first and second charges, which charge me, whatever moral guilt is alledged to be included in them, with the term fraud. Sir, I presume, from the evidence, that the fraud meant to have been proved, was supposed to have been proved, was effected by concealing from different persons the terms in which a contract made with them was conceived, and which contract was signed by them. To that point I confine my defence: but if the complexion of the case is either to establish or refute any intention in me to commit a fraud, when I first drew for the whole of the marching guineas, it must surely weigh with the House to find that I paid every guinea instantly to every man at that time in the regiment; that I offered to return the remainder to the receiver-general, who refused to accept it; that long before the exhibition of any articles against me, a general voucher passed for the expenditure of the whole of that sum, which, in fact, was expended, for which the captains gave vouchers, and which they have sworn they would not have given, unless convinced that

the whole sum had been expended; and that this is not a case where it is even pretended that the supposed object of the fraud could possibly have tempted any man to commit it. For it is but on the irregular application (and which the charge terms misapplication) of a few of these guineas, that the whole charge is grounded, and not on an embezzlement of them. Even this circumstance, I assure the House, arose from a misconception of the act, from which I conceived the recruits, as well as the men of the regiment, who were embodied in the county, were entitled to their marching guinea also before they marched out of the county, and therefore agreed with them before they enlisted, for the payment of it along with their bounty, whilst in the county, and paid it to them inclusively with that bounty.

“The moral turpitude of making such an agreement with any man before he was entitled, who knew what he was doing, and consequently was free to accept or reject any terms offered to him, I profess I cannot discern. If the recruit even did not understand specifically the meaning of the word marching guinea, as described by the act, yet if he generally understood (and indeed the receipt expresses it) that it was something besides, and in addition to his bounty, and that that sum was all he was to have for coming into the regiment, it was his own act; and is it not with the utmost caution that men ought to be allowed to come into the courts of justice to rescind their own agreements, and that by criminating those with whom they were made, when they offer no other proof of imposition than their own testimony itself, inconsistent and contradicted both by written and verbal testimony also. But I submit to the House, as I did in my defence, that no receipts or agreements have been fraudulently obtained from any man, and even if they had been, it was neither with my privity or consent.—Six men only, out of the many recruits enlisted at the board of lieutenancy, were called to prove that the agreements for their bounty, including their marching guineas, had been fraudulently obtained from them. Four of these say, they either agreed with me or my serjeant, and two say, they agreed with certain men called militia insurers, or their principals. The first four affirm, that they never agreed for their marching guinea, and that the paper expressing that circumstance, was never either read to them or by them, though this paper is a plain printed slip of paper (except in one instance, and then it was not produced,) containing five lines in large letters, the words marching guineas, distinguished by large roman capitals. In their examination, in chief, they offered to give a clear and distinct

distinct relation of all that passed at the board, when enlisted. They at first positively denied any explanation or reading of the agreement, but one, when pressed, admitted the serjeant did read the agreement, but *he* paid little attention to it; and the three others, when offering to the court a supposed correct account of many facts that happened at the same time, then nearly two years before, and assuming correctly and accurately to remember every word and fact which could have a tendency to criminate me, but chusing to forget every thing which passed that would have refuted the charge of imposition; when unable to reconcile part of this testimony, said they were drunk, intoxicated, or in some manner besotted. If sober when they signed this agreement, how could they be ignorant of the contents of five lines of a plain, uninterpolated slip of paper, and which they set their names, not their marks, to?— Could they write without their eyes being fixed upon the paper? And if drunk, ought they to have been admitted to come forward in a court of justice, to affirm or deny any part of a conversation which passed during their intoxication two years before? Whose honour or life is safe, if a fraud or felony can be established by men, who, relating long conversations, say they were drunk at the time they heard them? Had these men professed, in the out-set of their evidence, that they were deceived by having been made drunk, such a fact, had I countenanced it, would have been worthy of the most serious discussion; but in their examination in chief, they do not pretend to have been drunk at all; it is in their cross-examination that they first introduce the circumstance of drunkenness, and that not as an imputation on me, but as an excuse, or exculpation of the then obvious and gross inconsistency of their evidence.

“ And here I submit that though various objections were made by me to different questions and evidence, they do not appear in the printed report of the trial. Here, Sir, I submit, it might have been justly expected by me, that the whole evidence of men, who on cross-examination had confessed themselves intoxicated, ought to have been struck out of the minutes of the proceedings. As to the two other men, they were two substitutes not engaged by me at all, but by men called militia insurers, who paid them their bounty, receipts for their marching guinea were also taken from them. But the evidence proves this circumstance to have originated in hurry and mistake, contrary to the general practice, and through the inadvertence of the recruiting serjeants. But supposing these agreements had not been read, my orders, as
proved

proved by one of the prosecutor's witnesses, as well as by Captain Mason, were always to read and explain those agreements to the substitutes, and which both he and Captain Mason swear were duly observed. If the serjeant did not do so, was he so far my agent for the purpose of defrauding another without my concurrence? And by what law could I be responsible for his not doing that which I positively ordered him to do? If the complexion of the case, subsequent to my causing these receipts to be taken, is to bear on this question, I intreat the House to look to the evidence of the Duke of Richmond; it will there be found that I communicated the circumstance of the men having signed these receipts, to his grace, to whom the men had complained, informing him, that when I enlisted the men, I had agreed to give a certain sum of money, including their marching guineas, and that that circumstance was expressed in the receipt for the bounty. His grace, in several conversations, gave it me as his opinion, that the men who had given receipts could not make any further claim on that account, always supposing such receipts to have been bona fide given. This matter was peculiarly referred to his grace, and, according to the prosecutor's letter, dated March, 1794, the matter there rested as a disputable question with him.

"I beg further to refer to the production and full discussion of these receipts, among my officers, at Shoreham; and however irregular some may have deemed these receipts, yet there, and in all our meetings, neither the prosecutor, nor any other man, ever suggested the idea of a fraud; and he has ever represented me so pertinacious in my opinion of my receipts, as constantly, and in all companies, to assert their validity, to commit them into all hands, to declare my readiness to try the question, to leave these to the captains to do any thing that might draw an inquiry on them. Are these the acts of a man who has committed, or authorized a fraud? I am confident that the House, if considering such facts as these as jurymen, scrutinizing the mind of their fellow-countrymen, would find it impossible to make up their minds to a verdict of intentional fraud, against a man who has ever shewn himself provoking every sort of inquiry and discussion on those very receipts.

As to the eighth article, which accuses me of deducting a guinea from the bounties of the soldier, alleging it to be so done for cloathing, and converting it to my own use, I answer, whether the guinea was deducted from the bounties, or whether it was agreed that it should be in stop-cloathing for the recruit

recruit before he ever enlisted, is a matter of fact which the House will judge of on due reference to the evidence before them. But the proof that the men did contract for slop-cloathing is, that it appears in evidence that they complained that the contract had not been fully performed on the part of the regimental taylor, and that this also was the system at the board, a system adopted on the suggestion of the prosecutor himself, to prevent desertion. One witness has sworn so in pointed terms, and that he informed all his men, before they engaged with him, that the deposit and payment of the guinea at the board, would be required of them when sworn in, for which reason he added a guinea to their bounty. Four out of the six witnesses on this charge, and those adduced by the prosecutor himself, are men engaged by this militia insurer. But that I converted the guinea to my own use, I solemnly deny, and it is as solemnly proved on the trial, that I never touched it, but that the regimental taylor had it, and gave value for it; each man had for his guinea, a coat, waistcoat, and hat, and ultimately a pair of breeches also. They all had their regimental cloathing in addition, and in the same year also. This plan of cloathing was to benefit the service, and not for my own emolument; and although some men might have worn their slop cloathing a few months extraordinary, yet, upon the whole, the regiment was benefited, and no man was deprived of one single article of cloathing which government allows.

"Sir, the third, fourth, sixth, and seventh charges are dividable into two heads: the first a corrupt receipt of monies for a corrupt purpose, and the converting to my own use that money: the second an embezzlement of monies taken for an innocent or an indifferent purpose. The first point comprehends the discharge of deserters and other men giving money to provide a substitute; the second the non-immediate application of monies destined to provide the regiment with recruits. To the first I entreat the House to observe, that having undertaken the recruit of the regiment in part, as other colonels of a regiment might have done, I did conceive myself at liberty, on some occasions, to permit, under some circumstances, men to quit the regiment on their putting into my hands a sum to procure a man in their place; and I did conceive that if I did continue without intermission that recruit, I fully, and not corruptly, discharged the engagement which I so contracted. On this principle I did discharge some of the men who were deserters, but no more than three in number in the course of

three;

three years. For I still solemnly deny, as I did on the trial, that I knew of the discharge of two men, mentioned in the charge. One or two men, not being deserters, I also discharged, whose particular situation rendered them anxious to quit, and who were considered by me not fit for the service, after having made a sufficient inquiry on that point. These sums were openly proposed, and openly received, for the purpose of finding other men; but in no case I took such sums of money as bribe, nor had any conception that I did not discharge my engagement, by keeping my recruiting parties in activity under a general order. The House, Sir, cannot draw an inference from hence that the money paid was a bribe to me to pardon and discharge the men; for the evidence proves that the money was expressly taken by me, in order with it to find another man; that I received it as such, and on written documents that I acknowledged it for that purpose received. I have expressly charged myself with that money for that purpose. Can the House then conclude it was originally given for another purpose, than the evidence proves it was given for? Or infer an intention contrary to the fact? Sir, I beg leave to ask, what constitutes the prominent features of the conduct of a man, corruptly receiving money for a corrupt purpose? what but extortion, rapacity, and secrecy. I have not taken advantage of the situation of any man having deserted, nor proportioned my demand to his expectation of punishment, nor requested my name not to be mentioned, nor burned, nor obliterated the proving documents; but, on the contrary, have ever given them away against myself. The whole purport and tenor of my language, written or verbal, was not what should be given, that punishment or duty might be evaded; but if urged by repeated intercession, if the case was to be yielded to, what was the sum that would furnish another man, and supply the place of him whose peculiar case procured his discharge. On this principle also of recruiting, I received a fund to provide for that recruit from the hands of the principals drawn by ballot; and certainly, if I had not thought I was acting conscientiously, I never should have so acted with that publicity and openness which is the prominent character of all the acts of which I am accused.

"It is true that deserters have, in some instances been posted to persons from whom I had received money to provide a man for, but this was from no particular order of mine; it was the general practice of the board adopted by the clerk of it, a practice which I found when I came to the board, and which

not thinking either criminal or erroneous, I never contradicted, but left the clerk of the board to act according to his own discretion, and which by no means destroyed the obligation in me to find another man also. That discretion he has sworn he exercised. The monies arising from all these circumstances, constituted publicly a fund in my hands to be applied in finding men for the regiment. That fund I so employed, and it was every day diminishing, it was every day applied towards the purpose for which it was received, not specifically applied, but generally applied. If I originally received that fund for the purpose of getting substitutes, and was daily so applying it, I beg leave, seriously, to ask the House when the embezzlement began, and by what it is proved? If it was given me for a purpose which I instantly set about executing, and daily executed, how is the crime of retainer or embezzlement proved? These men could not be procured in a day, nor a month; the principals could not have procured them immediately, I could not immediately. It was a fund which I acknowledged to have received for a given purpose, which purpose I never delayed executing, which in my hands was solely applicable to that purpose, and to be accounted for by me. I dispatched parties. I had serjeants and corporals constantly on the recruit, I called them to the board, I severely reprimanded them whenever I found they had been negligent, I gave them unlimited orders to procure men, I told them to get them at all events. I entered at another time into a competition with the recruiting for the city of London, I gave two guineas more than they allowed. I held additional boards, and got many of the best men who otherwise would have enlisted with them, I paid all the expences of enlisting myself, I paid all the bounties myself, I applied the fund I had received for the purpose for which it was received. Neglect and delay (if even they had existed) in applying this fund might call down upon me a military censure; but my moral character, my character as a gentleman, as a man, will not, I trust, under these circumstances, stand impeached, when nothing but the suspension of my command, prevented me from expending every shilling I had received, and when that very suspension found me in the summer of 1795, in the very act of expending it.

“To the charge of rejecting fit men, and of engaging unfit men, on account of the difference of bounties, I must refer the House to the evidence, to learn, whether I, myself, in any instance, so did; or whether, even my agents did so by my orders. For the reason alledged in the charge, I do

not fear that the House will find that fact wilfully done by me, or any of those whom I employed; and although it may be true that the bounty given for men was not always so extensive as the sum received for the purpose, yet the saving resulting from thence it was never my intention to convert to my use, but on the contrary, that I have proved before the court martial my having expended on the regiment a sum of above 4000*l.* which far exceeds any savings I could have in hand from any surplus of bounty, and no part of which is allowed by government.

"To the charge of wilfully keeping the regiment incomplete, though it be true, the severe epithets of the article of war are not introduced, as in the other charges, yet I cannot refrain from observing to the House, that though this regiment, at the time of my suspension from my command, was deficient in numbers, eighty eight, yet, when it marched out of the county, and when I first took the command of it, it was at least one hundred and sixty-four deficient, as appears by the weekly statements. The Middlesex regiment are ever difficult to keep complete, and have been much more so during the late extraordinary exertions, both for the army and manning of his Majesty's Navy, and that during the whole time I recruited the regiment, my recruiting parties were daily employed, under unlimited orders, to get men. That they were unlimited, I appeal to my own letter dated in June, 1795, urging my recruiting sergeants to get men; and before any information was given me that I was to be brought to a court martial, much less of the specific articles of which I was to be accused so long indeed before, that it appears that I had no official notice until the ensuing month of September that any articles were exhibited against me; and this from a letter from General Lascelles of that date, and on that subject. And I beg leave, Sir, to add, that I ought not to have been charged with the average deficiency of the regiment, nor farther than for those men whom I was bound to provide for the regiment.

"Sir, as to the charge of making a false entry in my orderly book, relative to a decision of a regimental court martial, I can say no more, than that I solemnly deny the wording of that entry; and that it does not appear on the evidence, that I ever gave any order on the subject, except by telling the serjeant himself, whom I restored to his rank, to go to my serjeant major and to tell him to put him, the restored man, in orders again as serjeant, without in any manner alluding to a court martial at all. The man did so; he communicated

municated my general order himself to the serjeant major, from whose misconception of the man's situation the wording of the order must have become erroneous. To the fact of the erroneous return, my answer is, that it was entirely unknown to me, and occasioned by the circumstance of the regimental clerk being ignorant of the discharge of some men whose names were improperly by him inserted in the roll; but this seems to me so solely a military offence, that I shall be silent upon it, referring the House to the evidence for their more full satisfaction, adding only, that that erroneous return was corrected a very few days after it was made, and the instant it was discovered.

"Sir, to compress the substance of my defence into such a compass as could retain the attention of the House, I do not conceive possible, considering the voluminous size of my trial; but what I have not been able to do, that I trust the House will, on examining into my fuller and printed defence, see whether it accords with the evidence produced before the court, and whence I trust, that though my conduct, in point of military regularity, may not be found wholly unblameable, yet my moral character, in my civil capacity, will not necessarily be found to deserve that, after the punishment I have already submitted to, the effect of those epithets should remain attached to it. I further must beg leave to intimate to the House, that it may possibly appear to them, that the court martial did exceed their jurisdiction, in putting me on my trial on several articles of accusation, for which I conceive I was responsible solely in my civil capacity; and that as I protested against that excess of jurisdiction, and I called on the Court or Judge-Advocate, to take the opinion of his Majesty's law officers, on those points, and which I do not learn was done; I say it may possibly be the opinion of the House, that should they even be disposed to carry my punishment still further, in so doing, they must necessarily give their sanction to that which I humbly conceive was an unconstitutional act. Sir, I have not yet learnt that there does exist any precedent of a proceeding in this House, against any of the members grounded on any military sentence or proceeding. Dear to me as the rights and privileges of this House are, it is not for me, in my situation, to stand as it were in their defence, but to leave to the House in its wisdom to decide and discuss, how far a precedent established in my person, may affect the relative situation of the House and the army, and what effect or possible control on the House such a precedent may produce, by seeming to authorise in times less constitutional, and

under a less firm government than that under which we live, a virtual influence of the military over the members of the House. Perfectly resigned to the determination of the House, in which I hope I have hitherto preserved an unfulfilled character, I here close my defence, submitting it to a comparison with the evidence on your table, and which doubtless will receive a full consideration."

Colonel Cavothorne then withdrew.

General Smith said, that in the course of a pretty long life it had frequently been his lot to bring forward an investigation of the conduct of military officers; that day, however, he stood upon different ground from that to which he had been accustomed—that of bestowing merited commendation on military men. He knew that it was his duty as a member of parliament to call on the House for a great and important consideration; in discharging that duty he did not feel it necessary to take up much of the time of the House to reply to any thing which had been uttered by the unfortunate member they had just heard. It was not his intention to go over any of the particulars of the proceedings of that court martial, to which that House and the nation were so much indebted for their conduct upon the case at present before the House, the decision of which reflected so much honour on the proceedings of that court. He had another reason for not examining, minutely, all the proceedings of that court martial, which was, that many of the members of the House, had read the whole of the proceedings, and he must acknowledge his obligations to the honourable member who moved that these proceedings be printed. These proceedings were comfortable to the ideas which he entertained of the subject. This was a matter of the greatest importance to the deliberation of that House. It involved in it the consequence of the military character in this country. It involved in it considerations of the dignity of the government of this country. It involved in it considerations of the safety of the state. These were the reasons why he brought it forward. The unfortunate gentleman whom the House had just heard, had said that his conduct was only the effect of an error in judgment. This was not the truth of the case. It was not the error of a day or a month, nor of a year. It appeared that the unfortunate member had with an extraordinary degree of perseverance, pursued the practice for which he was so justly censured by the court martial.

The general declared he had read the proceedings with great care and attention; and the more he examined them, the

the more he was convinced of the justice of the sentence, and the more he was confirmed in every idea he had entertained upon the subject. The opinion he had formed, was not adopted from light motives; it was impressed on his mind by a due regard for the institution of the militia, and the laws framed for its government. It was with regret, if not with indignation, he perceived, that the crimes imputed to the unfortunate member, and of which he was convicted, were not, as he said, an error in judgment, or the casual conduct of a day; it appeared, on the contrary, that he had persevered in them for a considerable time, and that with a pertinacity not easily to be accounted for. There were two or three points to which he wished to call the attention of the House, and first, as to a conversation said to have been held by this unfortunate member, with another colonel. It appeared, on the evidence, that this assertion was not founded in fact. Another speech of his should likewise be attended to: when it was observed to him, that his conduct was disapproved of by his general, What was his reply? "I don't care a damn for my general; I have consulted my brother officers, who are members of parliament, and they agree with me that I should not, and I will not." What terms were strong enough to reprobate such a speech? It was impossible for him not to reflect on the situation of men, who were colonels in the militia, of the great stake they have in this country, and the influence which their conduct must have on the public. It was fit that such a speech, from a person in such a situation, should be made public, and should be reprobated in that House. But the situation of this unfortunate officer was with him as a member of that House, but a very secondary consideration; it was the fatal effects that might ensue from it, that he anxiously looked to. His brother officers, so far from countenancing his conduct, on the contrary, frequently expressed their surprize at his having so long withheld from his men what was granted to them by parliament, and could scarcely be induced to believe he could be guilty of such offences. The general then adverted to the time when Colonel Cawthorne pursued this shameful line of conduct; it was at a time when there was much talk of riot, tumult, and discontent in the regiments, and was a behaviour so mean and unjust, that it was ill calculated, by its example, to enforce those laws by which order and obedience should be preserved? This consideration was surely no small aggravation of his guilt.

He could not, he said, help taking notice of the address of Mr. Cawthorne to the court martial, wherein he declared that

that the censure of the Court would be equal to a sentence of perpetual banishment from his native land, or of death itself. Indeed to an officer he thought death would be preferable. Impressed with these sentiments, and knowing that the militia of this country was essential to its interests, and now acknowledged to be so by all who understood it; feeling the advantages which we enjoyed from having such a body of men, he wished it to be preserved pure and immaculate, and therefore he wished an abuse in that body to be seriously attended to by that House. They should by the manner in which they treated this case, hold out an example to others, and by so doing, they would continue to preserve to the country the real blessings of a good militia, and that body would still be the real safeguard of the internal tranquility of the kingdom. Could they then see a man in the situation of this unfortunate member, invested with such a trust, and abusing it as he had done, without marking their disapprobation of his conduct in the strongest manner they could? If it appeared to the conviction of a court martial, that he had acted thus corruptly, and thus injuriously to the interest of the country, should they not do every thing in their power to satisfy the public upon such a case? Was not the unfortunate member properly subjected to martial law? Had he not been fairly condemned by that law? Had that court not declared his motives to be corrupt, and his conduct fraudulent? Then being a member of the House of Commons, should not that House take proper notice of it? Perhaps some objections would be started against what he should propose on the score of precedent. He had heard much of precedents, and he had read the entries on the journals of almost all the members who had been expelled the House, but he should quote none of them, because he thought it unnecessary. Indeed in what he was doing he was following the impulse of his own mind merely; he did not know there was one man in the House who would second his motion. This he meant to state by way of parenthesis only. The great object he had in view was that of keeping up the respectability of the character of the militia, which was so essential to the safety of the country. If once the character of that body, for honour, integrity, and independence should be gone, farewell to all internal security to Great Britain. It should be always understood that military officers accepted their employment from pure patriotism. If once it were conceived and admitted that there motives were not of this pure nature, their would be an end of their dignity, and with it their use. There were many precedents, as he had said already, to justify the motion with which he should conclude;

this

this case, however, was infinitely stronger than any one of them. The House had expelled many of its members for various reasons. They should not suffer a man to be a member of the House who had been guilty of what the unfortunate gentleman whose case was now before them had been proved to be guilty. They should not suffer any corruption whatever in those who have the command of any part of the military. Mr. Cawthorne was proved to be such a person, and therefore an unfit person to sit in the House of Commons. He should therefore move, "That it appearing to this House that John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. a member of this House, has been found guilty on the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, tenth, eleventh, and thirteenth articles in the terms mentioned in the sentence of the court martial—Resolved, that he be expelled this House."

The motion being seconded by Mr. *Pierpoint*, junior.

Mr. *Wigley* entered into a defence of the honourable gentleman who was the object of the honourable general's motion. He conceived that the house should pause before it came to a decision, and did not think any gentleman competent to form a judgment who had not read the minutes of the trial. He confessed he had perused them with infinite care and attention, and contended, that although the conduct of that unfortunate gentleman might be improper and unmilitary, it did not appear that he meant to commit a fraud, because there were no marks of fraud in his conduct. The charge that had been stated with respect to the marching guineas, he considered not to have been made out on the trial; on a perusal of the minutes, gentlemen would find that the men, when the troops marched to Hounslow, were paid. Much stress had been laid by the honourable general, on a harsh and intemperate expression used by the unfortunate gentleman, but if he referred to folio 107, he would find that Colonel Cawthorne wrote to his agent to take General Howe's advice and direction in his cooler judgement, and by this letter it was manifest that he had no objection to pay the marching guineas. In folio 1704, of the Report, it would be found that this was more strongly stated; and here he must observe, that the amount of what was pronounced a fraud stood thus: out of 533 guineas he paid all away at Hounslow except 101; so that if peculation was his object, he would certainly have kept the whole. In November 1794, the officers had a meeting; they did not then attribute fraud to the unfortunate member; they only came to a resolution, that the men were entitled to their marching guineas,

guineas, and ought to be paid. The learned gentleman next adverted to the evidence of R. Jones, the high constable, with respect to the charge of taking money for substitutes. In this particular it would be found, that he did not act through a corrupt intention, but through motives of humanity; for in three years, not more than three men were discharged, and two of the three were unfit for service. The charge of taking money for substitutes, certainly could not bear out the honourable general in the charge of corruption, for that money never went into his pocket, though it might into those of his agent; and here he must remark, that the unfortunate member expended of his own property, four hundred guineas, for the advantage of the regiment, which was a convincing proof against his intention of speculation. With respect to the sentence of the court martial, it was not received in a court of record, and, of course, as a member of parliament, he would judge for himself. The honourable general, Mr. Wigley observed, had talked about precedents, but he had not produced any; he was persuaded that he could not find a precedent in which the sentence of a court martial had been made the foundation of an expulsion. He had not examined the journals himself; but a gentleman, upon whose accuracy he could rely, had taken that trouble; and there appeared no such precedent as far back as the year 1610. It had been said, that if full effect is not given to the sentence of a court martial, it might be productive of bad consequences to the discipline of the army; but if they were carried to the extent now proposed, they might be productive of consequences much more serious; for courts martial, in the hands of a despotic monarch, would then become a very serious engine of oppression.

With these impressions, he should move to put off the farther consideration of this business for three months; or if the house would not consent to that proposition, he should then move for some farther delay, in order that the house might have full time to consider the subject. He therefore concluded with moving, "That this debate be adjourned for three months."

General M Leed rose and complimented *General Smith* on the purity of his motives, in bringing this matter forward. He agreed with him that it was necessary to refer the conduct of military men to a court martial, whenever there was reason to suspect the propriety of such conduct. He was most willing to allow that this was necessary for the discipline of the army, on which so many of our important interests depended. He would say farther, that the militia was a more constitutional guard to the safety of the country, than a standing army,

army, although he was a member of the latter. He was conscious that the honourable general would not have moved the expulsion, but upon due consideration. He agreed too with the unfortunate member whose conduct was under discussion, that a sentence of a court martial, that he had behaved scandalously, was more severe than a sentence of perpetual banishment, or of death. He agreed in the necessity of supporting the honour of the military, in the necessity of supporting the honour of the house of commons, in the propriety of not permitting a person who acted scandalously, continuing a member of that house, and he agreed that the sentence of the court martial in this case, was perfectly just, and that the court martial had done honour to themselves, and justice to their country, by their conduct. He took the matter up, however, on a footing very different from any consideration which these topics involved; he did not think that the house of commons was bound by any of the proceedings of a court martial. He did not think that they were bound to enter into examination of the whole of that voluminous book then upon their table. The view he had of the subject was extremely different. The object he had in view, was to prevent any member of that house being obliged to submit to expulsion, merely on the authority of a court martial. If this, he said, was to be a reason for his expulsion, then there would be an extraordinary increase to the influence of the crown. Any member of that house might be tried and broke by a court martial, which was appointed by the crown, and then some person in that house, attached to a corrupt minister, who might be supposed hereafter to exist, (not to they present, for they all knew him to be immaculate) might move for the expulsion of such member, and upon the authority of that case, he must be expelled, if the proceedings of the court martial were to be made the basis of expulsion. This case, therefore, appeared to him to be a very dangerous precedent. But the honourable general had quoted no case as a precedent that a member of that house had been expelled from that house because he was broke by a court martial. He believed there was not an instance of it. He remembered, on the contrary, the case of a noble lord who had been censured by a court martial, and who afterwards, so far from being expelled, was a member of administration. His being one of the cabinet was during the American war. The sentence was ordered to be read to the army, as this was to the militia. Was that sentence, however, followed up by a vote of expulsion? Certainly not; and yet that was a charge of a much higher nature than that of the unfortunate member,

member, whose case was then before the House. He had quoted to the house a case in which the crime was infinitely greater against his country than the present, and yet no motion was made for expulsion in that case. Viewing, therefore, the whole of the subject before the house, he must say he did not wish the motion to be carried into execution, because it tended to establish a precedent by which some future corrupt minister, or some future ambitious monarch, might obtain the expulsion of any member of that house who opposed the proceedings of government. Under this impression, General M'Leod said, he should vote for any motion by which the question of expulsion was likely to be defeated.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that he was desirous of saying a few words in order to explain the vote he should give upon this subject. The honourable general had very properly brought under the consideration of the House a subject every way deserving its attention. If he thought it had been necessary before he could be prepared to give a vote upon the question before the House, to make himself acquainted with the whole of the proceedings of the trial before the court martial, he could not say that he was prepared to give his vote upon the question. He had, indeed, endeavoured to inform himself of the leading points of the case on which the House was now called upon to declare its opinion. He had not however, had time to examine it with minuteness. This he would certainly have done, had he thought it necessary before he delivered his opinion. But he did not think so. He differed totally from those who thought it was always inconsistent for that House to supersede any proceedings grounded on the sentence of a court martial. Some gentlemen seemed to think that the House of Commons should never do so. He thought otherwise. He thought it was at all times the duty of that House to take notice of the determination of any competent tribunal. To take notice of the decision of a court on a charge at common law, of statute law, of ecclesiastical law. In all such cases much tenderness to the life and liberty, and character of the subject was observed. It was fit therefore, that the House of Commons should pay respect to decisions of all such courts, while they held a competent jurisdiction over the point on which they determined, especially when by that decision it was proved, that a person had done something which rendered him unfit to be a member of such a body as that which he now had the honour to address, and especially when such a person was declared by such a court of competent jurisdiction, to be an object deserving punishment.—

And

And still more especially if they had shewn collaterally by proof, that he was worthy of it. The courts of law never did to that House; they gave their judgment publicly, but the evidence on which that judgment was formed was on their own records only, never transmitted to that House. Not so the case with courts martial, the evidence on which the judgment was founded, as well as the judgment itself, was by them laid before the House.

Two questions were to be considered by the House in this case: first, whether the charges set forth were proved against this unfortunate person, and, if proved, whether the object of these charges was not properly declared by this court of competent jurisdiction to try him (for so the court martial was) to be unworthy of credit? This they had done by the sentence which they pronounced on him. Secondly, whether there had been laid before the House, from any thing they had heard urged on behalf of the unfortunate person, such ground as to induce them to weigh it against the presumed truth of the decision of the court, and to impress the House with a doubt upon the subject, so as to counteract the credit due to the determination of a competent court? He must confess he thought there was not; and therefore he should give confidence to the decision of the court martial.

He did not see that any more doubt was to be entertained by the House of the purity of the determination of a court martial, when it had condemned a man, than that of any other court, since as he had said already, they accompanied their sentence with the whole of the evidence on which it was founded. The question was here, whether there was any counter statement on behalf of the unfortunate person, that could lead the House to entertain a doubt in their minds, of the propriety of the decision of the court martial. Having listened to what had been stated on both sides, he did not collect any thing that raised a presumption in his mind against the determination of the court. He really had not heard any thing to call in question the truth of the great and leading facts stated in the charge, and on which the conviction of the court martial was founded. The only question that remained therefore, was the general question, whether the crimes charged in a sentence of a court martial were grounds for the House of Commons to proceed upon? It was said there was no precedent for this proceeding in the House. If the principle he had stated was correct, there needed no precedent. Fortunately, very fortunately for this country, there were no precedents where a member of that House had before been guilty

of what a court martial had pronounced this unfortunate member to have been guilty, in terms as new as the guilt that occasioned them.

The honourable general who spoke last, in the course of his speech had alluded to the case of a noble lord, now no more, as a precedent against the motion. He would say nothing harsh of that noble lord, and he would only observe, that the cases were extremely different. The crime of which that noble lord was convicted by a court martial, was not a crime which in itself proved him unworthy of public trust: it amounted solely to disobedience of military orders, and such a disobedience might, in some instances be attended with success. The conduct of that noble lord was, by the decision of a court martial proved to have prevented a decisive issue to a brilliant action. If an officer, however, by disobedience to orders, should succeed in obtaining a victory, though found guilty by the sentence of a court martial, he might, from the nature of the transaction, be entitled to and receive the thanks of that House. The cases were widely different, in that of the noble lord, his military capacity was alone affected; in the present case, there was a stigma affixed to the reputation of the person, and that of the foulest kind, embezzlement, fraud, and conduct unbecoming the character of a gentleman. The house should therefore bear in mind the principle, that they had proceeded on the motion, not because the court martial had found him generally guilty of the charges, but because they had found him guilty of that which rendered him unworthy a seat in that House. To prevent, therefore, the possibility of applying the present motion, if successful, as a precedent hereafter, that the House should generally proceed on the sentence of a court martial, he would propose, that the specific motives on which the court martial had found the unfortunate person who was the subject of discussion, guilty, should be recorded on the journals of the House. Such a proceeding, would, in his opinion, completely guard against the possibility of any inference which might be unfairly drawn, that the resolution of the House of Commons had been founded merely on the sentence of the court martial. The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded by observing, that he trusted the House would agree to the motion, amended in that specific manner, as it embraced an object of great and general consequence.

General M Leck, said a few words in explanation, importing that he did not mean to compare the character of the noble lord alluded to, to that of the object of the present discussion; but only in illustration of his principle, that the sentence

of

of a court martial was not a fit ground of expulsion from that House.

Sir Charles Morgan considered himself, in the present instance, as acting in a civil and not in a military capacity: any judgment, therefore, he might entertain in the latter view of the subject, did not preclude him from regarding it as a new question now. He therefore was in favour of further delay.

General Tarleton condemned the conduct of Mr. Cawthorne, as a military man, but as a member of parliament, doubted the propriety of the House proceeding to expel any one of its members, from the evidence of any court whatever. He inclined to think they could not regularly proceed to such a measure, without hearing evidence of the guilt of the party, at the bar of the House. He said this not from any idea of screening the unfortunate person, nor of saying any thing against the court martial, but on a contrary principle; he was anxious for the regularity of the proceedings of the House, and afraid of the precedent which was about to be established.

Mr. Francis said, that differing entirely from the sentiments expressed by his honourable friend who spoke last (*General Tarleton*) he thought himself bound to give the reason of his opinion, though he had not originally intended to have spoken at all on the subject. It appeared to him that the House, in the function and duty which they were to exercise that night, did not assume, and could not hold, any appellate jurisdiction whatever from the sentence of a court martial. It had no authority to revise the proceedings, or to confirm or reverse the sentence. The sole purpose for which, as he conceived, the proceedings were ordered to be laid on the table was, that the members might have the opportunity and the means of judging, for the satisfaction of their own consciences, and for the direction of their own conduct on another point, whether the sentence of the court martial, as is appeared on the face of the proceedings, and without admitting even into their thoughts any extrajudicial evidence or argument, was or was not warranted? The next question for the House would be, whether the facts, supposing them to be truly found and justly qualified, would permit the House to continue the high trust of a member of parliament in the person who was the object of such a verdict?

Mr. Courtenay said, nothing that he had heard in defence of the unfortunate gentleman had altered his opinion with respect to the necessity and propriety of the present motion. The question

question, in his mind, was extremely important. He had himself served early in life in the militia, who, undoubtedly, were the protectors of our liberties. The conduct of the officers should be distinguished by great circumspection, to encourage the peasantry and lower ranks to serve. He always conceived, instead of extracting from the privates their pittance, that officers were at considerable expence from their liberality in the service. With respect to courts martial, nothing could be more just, nor a fairer tribunal for the person put on his trial. The court martial which sat on the honourable gentleman was composed of men of great rank and character; he had read the detail of the proceedings, and was convinced of the propriety of the verdict. If the honourable general's idea was acceded to of hearing the whole evidence detailed by the several witnesses at the bar, it would in fact, not be trying the unfortunate member, but be merely a trial of the court martial. With respect to the want of precedent, he was happy to find that the journals of the House did not furnish one; and as the principle on which the motion was grounded could not be objected to, there did not appear to him any necessity for one; but as the militia was only established in 1756, it was ridiculous to search for precedents as far back as 1610. The right honourable gentleman who opposed the amendment had, by his clear and perspicuous statement, made it unnecessary for him to trouble the House any length of time, he should therefore vote against the amendment.

Mr. *Bouverie* said, it was not his intention to have troubled the House, had not the gentleman who had spoken held opinions contrary to those which he maintained. He did not rise either to justify or palliate the unfortunate gentleman, but if the precedent was established, he saw danger, as the crown could withhold or grant a court martial, according to its pleasure.

The *Solicitor General* said, the question was comprised in the following consideration: Whether the House were not bound to take notice of a sentence, as far as it related to an individual belonging to their own body, and in whose case their honour was implicated? He had perused the evidence laid before the court martial for the purpose of ascertaining whether the crime of which the unfortunate gentleman was accused, referred alone to military law? He had found, that some of the charges were merely military, while others accused him of fraud and embezzlement, which rendered him incapable of acting in a public capacity.

General *Smith* said a few words in reply, in the course of which he disclaimed all motives for the part he had taken in the

the business, excepting those of public duty, and a wish to support the cause of justice, and the honour of the House of Commons. He declared he highly approved, and should adopt, the amendment suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of inserting on the journals, the special reasons of their proceedings, that it might not appear as resulting of course and solely from the sentence of a court martial only.

The question was then put, when there appeared,

Ayes, (For the amendment) - - - 12

Noes, (Against it) - - - 108

Majority - - - 96

The original motion was with leave of the House withdrawn, and the following moved instead of it. "And it appearing to the House, that John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. a member of this House has been found guilty by a court martial of divers charges, in respect of some of which, he is found guilty of having acted fraudulently, and in a scandalous and infamous manner, unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman."

Resolved, "That the said John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. be expelled this House."

SARDINIAN SUBSIDY.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that considering the lateness of the hour, and the thinness of the House, he would not bring forward his motion respecting the sum to be advanced to his Sardinian Majesty, if gentlemen on the other side of the House intended at that time to discuss the measure.

General Tarleton replied, that he believed it was not then in idea to debate the question, and that the motion might be opposed when the report of the committee, in which the motion would be made, was received.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

The House on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having resolved itself into a committee of the whole House, it was moved and agreed to, "That a sum of 200,000*l.* be granted to his majesty, to enable him to make good his engagements with his Sardinian Majesty."

NAVY BILLS.

The House having resolved itself into a committee of ways and means.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that the navy bills were usually funded at five per cent. They might be divided into

into two classes, those which were immediately due, and the latest which had eight months to run. On the first 105l. would be given for every 100l. and on the latter 104l. for every 100l. With some small addition of discount the *bonus* might be stated on the first class at four, and on the latter three; which, if averaged would give a *bonus* of three and a half.—He then moved a resolution conformable to these statements, which being agreed to, the report was brought up, and ordered to be received.

It was agreed to,—"That the House do resolve itself next Wednesday into a committee to consider further of ways and means to raise a supply to be granted to his majesty."

QUAKERS' BELIEF BILL.

Serjeant Adair moved the order of the day for the second reading of the Bill for the Relief of Quakers against arrests for tithes, which was read accordingly; and on the question for the second reading being put;

Sir Richard Hill rose, to return his thanks to his honourable and learned friend for this Bill, which did honour to his heart and understanding. The Quakers, he said, deserved indulgence, for they had always shewn themselves loyal subjects and friends to good order. The only objection he had to the Bill was, that it did not go far enough, and he hoped his honourable and learned friend would mend it in that respect when in the committee.

The Bill was then read a second time, and ordered to be committed next day.

DUTIES ON SUGARS.

In a committee of the whole house to consider of the 110th chapter of the thirty-fifth of George III. relative to the allowance of drawbacks and payments of the bounties on sugars, it was resolved, that the chairman do move for leave to bring in a Bill to alter an act made in the last session of parliament, for regulating allowances on drawbacks and payments of bounties on sugars. Agreed to.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, May 3.

Heard counsel further on the appeal, *Sir William Pulteney* and others, appellants, *v.* the Countess Dowager of *Darlington* and others, respondents.—Adjourned.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *May 3.*

WINDOW TAX.

Mr. *Rose* stated to the house, that it had been thought expedient that dairies, and rooms used for keeping and drying cheese, the windows of which were not glazed, but had only iron bars or wooden lattices, should not be liable to the window tax. The house then resolved itself into a committee of the whole house, in which Mr. *Rose* proposed a resolution to the above effect, which, after a short conversation, was agreed to.

SARDINIAN SUBSIDY.

Mr. *Hobart* brought up the report of the committee of supply, upon the resolution for granting a subsidy of 200,000*l.* to his Sardinian majesty. Upon the motion for agreeing with the report,

Mr. *Fox* said, that this subsidy having been granted year after year, he should not trouble the House with any observations upon it, if there was not something in the circumstances of the present moment which called for peculiar consideration. The proposition to grant the King of Sardinia a subsidy, did not stand upon the same ground that it formerly did, because it was then made upon the principle that he was to co-operate with the other allies against the French. That, however, was not the case, because it was well known that the King of Sardinia had manifested an inclination to make peace, and had made proposals to that effect.

He would not then enter into the consideration, whether it would be for the advantage of this country, that the king of Sardinia should make a separate peace or not, though in his own opinion, it would; but that was not the subject of discussion. It was a matter of serious consideration, however for that house, when they were called upon to vote a subsidy to that prince, whether they should not be satisfied of the principle upon which they were proceeding, and the advantages they expected to derive from it. If it was our object to induce him to continue the war with France, it certainly was necessary for us to know whether he conceived himself bound, not to make peace without our consent. If he was not bound, then it became a question how far ministers had been consenting to his attempt to procure a separate peace for himself. If his co-operation in the war was considered as essential to the interests of this country, ministers should state to the house what secu-

rity they had that he would be able to continue his assistance to us. Before the subsidy was granted, it was not too much to ask, whether government had grounds to convince them that he would not be compelled to make a separate peace? The house were the more bound to be satisfied upon this point from the unfortunate experience they had of subsidiary treaties with other powers. He should only add, that if this subsidy had been the cause of the king of Sardinia's carrying on the war, it was both a burden to this country, and a misfortune to that monarch.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, that, if the house had been induced to grant this subsidy to his Sardinian majesty for several years, as far as new circumstances called upon them to continue it, they were bound to continue it, both in point of honour and in point of prudence, with alacrity; he had no difficulty in declaring, that the whole conduct of his Sardinian majesty, from the first moment in which the subsidy was granted, to the present, had afforded one uniform example of honour and fidelity, and an example worth the imitation of the other powers. He could not, with propriety, and the regard that was due to the general service, enter so fully into a detail of the proceedings of his Sardinian majesty, as the nature of circumstances required for his vindication; but he denied that his Sardinian majesty had ever manifested any desire for a separate peace. It was true, that, at a time when he was threatened with impending danger, he opened an intercourse with the enemy, stating upon what terms he was willing to agree to an armistice. The terms were, that he would enter into an armistice with his friend and ally, the emperor; but, upon no other condition. He immediately signified this to the emperor, who refused his consent, and there the negotiation ended. During this intercourse, however, which did not proceed far, the enemy acquainted him that they would make a separate peace with him, provided he would cede all the places they had conquered in his dominions to them, and unite his arms with theirs against the other allies. The king of Sardinia immediately, with a magnanimity that could never be too highly praised, but such as became his rank, and might have been expected from his character, refused to accept any proposition upon terms so impolitic and unjust. So far it was evident that his Sardinian majesty entertained no idea of a separate peace, nor ever proceeded further in any intercourse with the enemy, than the pressing necessity of his situation compelled him, and the negotiation which he did enter into, only ended in shewing that he neither would conclude a separate armistice, nor a separate

separate peace. He now put it to the house upon the statement of these facts, whether they had more or less motives than formerly for fulfilling their engagements? In regard to any recent events, upon which some objections might perhaps be made, he had not yet received any authentic information, but as the vote only extended to the enabling his majesty to grant the subsidy, there might be full opportunity for gaining information yet upon it. So much for the satisfaction of those gentlemen who thought it the interest of this country to retain the king of Sardinia as our ally. With regard to the honourable gentleman, who seemed to entertain a doubt, whether or not it would be more advantageous for this country to do so, notwithstanding the experience of past events, and the repeated confirmations we had received of the activity and vigour and the exertions of the Sardinian forces, he must say, that this was the only way in which we could possibly put the king of Sardinia into such a situation as might enable him to make such terms with the enemy for a separate peace, as this country and the rest of the allies might admit to be comparatively and generally good. Upon that principle, therefore, he thought the honourable gentleman ought to have been the last man in the house to object to a motion, in which the future honour and power of this country was so much involved.

Mr. Fox said, that by declaring that he thought a separate peace with Sardinia would be advantageous for this country, he spoke with regard to the opportunity that his Sardinian majesty would thereby have of mediating between the other powers. He certainly did not mean to wish for a separate peace with Sardinia, exclusive of the interests of Great Britain and Austria; so far, however, as they were considered, the earlier such a peace were concluded, the better it would be, he thought, for all.

Mr. Francis, in reply to the right honourable gentleman opposite, said that the question before the House, *de facto*, was, whether this country ought to continue the subsidy to Sardinia? It was not necessary to consider how Sardinia had acted four months ago, but what her situation and probable mode of action would be at this time. If the information was authentic of the recent successes of the French in Lombardy, upon those successes would the probable mode of action of his Sardinian Majesty be founded, and so far were their opinions of the propriety of continuing the subsidy to be drawn; if the determination of his Sardinian majesty were founded, as it had been stated, upon the pressure of the enemy, it was reasonable to conclude that he would consider the emergency of his situation

tion, more than his magnanimity. He might, therefore, be induced to agree to a separate peace, for two reasons, and that without the least consideration or regard for the interests of his allies; first from the threats of the impending danger, and secondly by the temptations and interest which might be held out to him. As to confiding in the magnanimity of the King of Sardinia, he despised such confidence, and begged the House to look back to history for the character of the House of Savoy. It was fair to reason from such evidence, and he there found Sardinia had changed from side to side as often as her inclination or her interest prevailed. If it were true that the Austrians had experienced such a defeat as would place Sardinia at the mercy of the enemy, he would then ask, whether it would be wise in this country to grant so great a subsidy to his Sardinian majesty, as would not be of use to it if he entered into an alliance with the enemy, but against it?

The Secretary at War, said he entertained the highest respect for antiquity in general, but he totally disapproved of the reference to the former conduct of the House of Savoy, as an argument for drawing a conclusion prejudicial to the present king, because it was acting against experience. In regard to what had fallen from his honourable friend concerning the report of the enemy's successes in Italy, his right honourable friend had before stated, that no authentic information had been yet received, and even admitting it were true, there was a possibility of its not affecting their conduct in passing the vote of that evening, because the vote did not extend to the immediate granting of the money at all events, but merely to enable his majesty to do so, as, under the present circumstances, they were called upon, by every principle of honour and justice, to persist in the treaty.

General Smith spoke in favour of the motion.

Mr. Harrison thought the subsidy should be voted, but that it would not be proper to advance it until they knew the King of Sardinia's situation; it might happen that he might be compelled not only to make peace, but to assist the French; he therefore recommended it to the House to refer the second reading of the resolution, at least till better information should arrive.

The question for the second reading was then put and agreed to without a division.

ALIEN BILL.

The Solicitor General brought up a Bill for continuing the Alien Bill for a time to be limited, which was read a first time. On the question being put for the second reading,

Mr,

Mr. *Sheridan* asked, whether this was the same as the former Bill? He would now take the liberty to say he hoped that the same use would not be made of it as had lately been. He objected to the former Bill when it was brought forward, because he foresaw to what purposes it might be applied; and many events proved that his conjectures were right, particularly a late one; he alluded to the case of Mr. Alexander Lameth, who had been cruelly treated by a wanton exercise of power.

The *Solicitor General* said, that this Bill was merely a copy of the former Bill.

It was then read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time next day. As was also the Bill for regulating the mode of providing for the families of persons drawn by lot, and persons serving as substitutes in the militia in certain cases.

VETERINARY COLLEGE.

Mr. *Sumner* presented a petition on behalf of the noblemen, gentlemen, and other subscribers to the Veterinary College, stating the great importance to the public, particularly to the cavalry, &c. but that from the enlarged scale on which the place had been hitherto carried on, a pecuniary aid was requisite to carry it into effect, &c. and praying such relief as to the wisdom and public spirit of the House should seem meet, &c.

General Tarleton applauded the institution, and said, that while sums were voted on such problematical public advantages as finding out the longitude, an establishment of such certain benefit as the Veterinary College claimed the encouragement of the House too strongly to be resisted.

Mr. *Francis* wished to be informed, before he voted away the public money on the Veterinary College, what was meaning of the word Veterinary was.

Mr. *Sumner* said, he was not able to tell what the etymology of the word was, though he had looked into several dictionaries for the purpose. The general acceptation of it, however, was a school for farriery, an establishment which, in some shape or other, existed in every country.

Mr. *Jolliffe* suggested, upon authority from Pliny, that the word was derived from the Latin verb *veho* to carry, which by various corruptions fell into veterinary.

Alderman Newnham declared his opinion was in favour of the petition, and said he should not oppose the granting a considerable sum.

General

General Smith said, he did not approve of voting away money on such slender foundation as that before the House in the present case.

Mr. Sheridan said, he always felt as great reluctance as the honourable gentleman in voting away money; in the present instance, however, he felt none. Experience must have shewn every man, that some such institution was necessary; who was it that had not seen how shamefully that noble animal the horse was tortured by common farriers? Every man of humanity, he said, must feel sorrow on reflecting on the various abuses and different species of ill-treatment part of the brute creation suffered from the ignorant, the cruel, and the careless. The etymology of the word he conceived to be of little signification, when the general acceptation of it was so well known by the House. He hoped, therefore, the petition would be received.

Mr. Francis said, that if the word was derived from the verb *veho*, as an honourable gentleman had suggested, it was in some cases a misnomer, and inapplicable to draft horses.

Sir W. Dolben said, it applied also to bullocks, which were used merely for draft.

The Secretary at War said, that to satisfy the House, the petition did not rest on such slight authority as was suggested by *General Smith*, he would inform him, that it had passed under a board of general officers, who strongly recommended it.

The petition was referred to the committee of supply.

CURATES RELIEF BILL.

Sir William Scott moved the order of the day for the second reading of the Bill for the further support and maintenance of curates of the church of England.

The Speaker rose, in order to state the grounds on which the Bill stood over when it was last discussed. An objection had then been made upon a conception that it partook of the nature of a money Bill, and as such could not originate in the Lords, without a breach of the privileges of the Commons. He reminded the House that he gave it as his opinion that it did not come under that description. He had since given it great attention, had carefully examined the journals, and he was confirmed in his former opinion, that the Lords had a right in this case to originate such a Bill, as it was warranted by precedent, and no infringement of the privileges of the Commons. He mentioned a variety of cases in which the Lords exercised the right of introducing clauses, for payment

of money, not a public tax or toll, but as private decision of right. In divorce Bills, for instance, ordering one party to pay an annuity to the other. The present Bill did not all go to levy new taxes, tolls, or imposts, or to dispose of public money, but merely enacted a new distribution of sums already applied by parliament to particular private purposes, viz. the benefit of the clergy. The act of the 12th Queen Anne, which this followed, certainly originated in the Commons; but that of the first of Geo. I. which was much more objectionable than the present, originated in the lords; and though it underwent long discussion in the Commons on the principle of it, not a word of objection was made on the score of breach of privilege. He concluded with assuring the House of his conviction that this Bill, having originated in the other House, was no encroachment on a privilege, which the Commons always had preserved with particular care, and which they ought ever to maintain with unabating firmness, that of the controul of the public purse.

Mr. *Martin* declared he was satisfied with the explanation from the chair, as he highly approved the principle of the Bill, which had for its object the relief of men who were entitled to every attention. The difference between them and rectors, in point of emolument, was great and disproportionate; he trusted therefore, that no further objection would be made to a just provision for curates being enacted.

General Smith after a variety of observations expressed a wish, that no person possessing a benefice of 100l. a year, should receive any benefit from this provision.

Mr. *Hussey* objected to the Speaker's leaving the chair; he bowed to the Speaker's authority, he could not, however, but declare that none of the cases cited appeared to him to justify the present instance. In adultery, the money was granted on special circumstances; whereas by this Bill a general power was given to one description of men to tax another. He thought it dangerous to suffer any encroachment on their privileges, because the suffering one to pass would open the door to many more.

The *Speaker* proposed that the Act of the 1st of Geo. I. from which the present Bill derived should be read. It was read accordingly.

Mr. *Jodrell* made some observations upon the last clause empowering bishops arbitrarily to nominate and license curates, without the consent of rectors. This, he considered as a great hardship; it would he said make the curate entirely independent of the rector, and dependent on the bishop or ordinary

nary nominating and licensing him: it would create an influence not merely inconvenient, but dangerous to the liberties of this country. It was, in fact, departing from the principle of the Bill, namely, that of ameliorating the circumstances of the inferior clergy. He hoped, therefore, that an object so desirable might be obtained by less exceptionable means.

The *Speaker* informed the honourable member, that if he meant his objections to operate against the whole of the Bill, he was formal in then pressing them; but if he merely objected against particular clauses, he ought to reserve himself for the committee.

Mr. *Fiddrell* said, he did not wish to oppose the avowed principle of the Bill; he was aware that many of his objections might be cured in the committee. But the last clause which gave such arbitrary power to bishops, he wished to be entirely expunged.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the last clause was entirely unconnected with the principle of the Bill; and hence, with submission to the honourable gentleman, he ought to spare himself for the committee.

Mr. *Fiddrell* persisted in his former assertions. Upon which The *Speaker* remarked to him, that as his objections did not go to the whole of the Bill, he was rather irregular.

The question then being put, "that the *Speaker* leave the Chair,"

Mr. *Hussey* objected, on the ground that the Bill was completely in its nature a tax Bill. It went to take property from one description of persons, and to transfer it to another: for this no precedents, he contended, were adduced; and hence, he said, he would oppose the Bill in all its stages.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* contended against the honourable gentleman, that the Bill was merely for the distribution of an existing fund of a private and particular nature. If the House of Lords were permitted to bring in a Bill for the appropriation of first fruits and tithes, it certainly was no way improper for the present measure to originate with the Lords.

This was actually the case; for, by the statute of Queen Anne, the first fruits and tithes, which before were part of the public revenue, were appropriated to the clergy. Therefore the fund became of the nature of private property.

Mr. *Francis* wished to know, if the House was disposing (as it were) of the property of one description of men, and allotting it to another?

The

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that the moment this fund had been transferred by the crown to the clergy, it became of the nature of private property: but as it came from the laity to support the clergy, parliament were justified in regulating it.

Mr. Hawkins Browne agreed with the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*; but in the committee he said he would endeavour to press points which appeared to him to be of some importance.

Lord William Russell declared he approved of the principle of increasing the stipend of the curate; but was against giving an arbitrary power to bishops.

Mr. Serjeant Adair said, he presumed the noble lord's objection was to the last clause, which was unconnected with the principle of the Bill, therefore he could not fairly object to going into the committee, where a remedy might be applied.

Sir William Scott said, the noble lord ought to point out the clauses he objected to; and argued on the general convenience and advantage of such a measure.

General Smith, though he disapproved of some provisions in the Bill, wished it to go into a committee.

Mr. Fiddrell adduced the precedent of a Bill for the better payment of church and poor rates, which, in 1678, had been rejected, because it originated in the lords.

The *Speaker* observed, that a regulation respecting poor rates, in any way, was of a public nature and to all intents and purposes a money Bill; and hence that Bill was different from the present one. He assured the House he had consulted the best law authorities in this country; and had collected all the information which the journals of the House could supply him with on the question, before he suggested his sentiments.

The House then resolved itself into a committee, *Mr. Hobart* in the chair.

Mr. Fiddrell wished to introduce an amendment for proportioning the stipend of the curate to the income of the rector, which after considerable debate was negatived.

Mr. Wilberforce submitted another amendment, for extending the stipend of the curate beyond 73*l.* a year (as stated in the clause), to one-sixth of the excess of the income above 450*l.* per annum; when it exceeded that sum. On this the House divided.

Ayes, (for the Amendment) 13

Noes, (Against it,) 33

Majority

The other provisions were agreed to, after a conversation of much length, till the House proceeded to the last, namely, the clause for extending the power of bishops to nominate and licence curates, &c.

Serjeant Adair said, he wished on that clause to press his ideas at large; and suggested the convenience of doing so on the report.

General Smith then moved, that the chairman report progress; which, after some conversation across the table, was agreed to, &c. and the committee ordered to sit again on Thursday the 5th instant.

QUAKERS.

On Mr. *Serjeant Adair's* motion for the commitment of the Bill for the Relief, &c. of the people called Quakers, being read,

Sir Wm. Dolben suggested the idea of deferring the committee for a more full attendance of the House.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair*, after expressing a wish that the Bill might be dispatched through the House, lest it should be lost from the lateness of the session, agreed to defer the committee till Monday next, which was accordingly ordered.

SLAVE CARRYING BILL.

Sir Wm. Dolben moved the commitment of the Bill, which, after a short conversation, was postponed to Monday next.

NEWSPAPER BILL.

Mr. *Barnard* moved, that the House resolve itself into a committee on the Bill for regulating the conveyance of newspapers.

Mr. *Dent* and *General Smith* expressed themselves unfriendly to the principle of the Bill.

After a few words, the committee was deferred to that day week.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, May 4.

Heard counsel on a cause wherein the right honourable Lord Viscount Dudley and Ward was appellant, and Anna Maria Ward and others were respondents. After which their lordships ordered the decree to be affirmed, and that it be referred to the master, to whom the cause was originally referred, to tax the costs of all the parties in this appeal in the same manner as if the cause was determined by the decree, &c.

On the motion of the Lord Chancellor, read some of the Bills upon the table, and adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, May 4.

The *Speaker* counted the members present at four o'clock, and there being only 29, an adjournment took place of course.

Mr. *Alderman Lushington* moved, that the report of the committee appointed to consider the Turnpike Bill be received on Monday.

The *Master of the Rolls* asked whether a Bill was to be brought in upon the report this session?

Mr. *Alderman Lushington* replied in the affirmative.—Ordered.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, May 5.

General Smith moved for a new writ to be issued for a member of parliament to represent the city of Lincoln, in the room of John Fenton Cawthorne, Esq. expelled.

GENERAL INCLOSURE.

Sir John Sinclair said, from the recommendation of various gentlemen who were friends to the Bill, he was induced to postpone it till another session, as the most likely means of rendering it successful.

The order for its commitment was therefore discharged.

WINE DUTY BILL.

Previously to the House resolving itself into a committee on the above Bill.

Mr. *Grey* said, he felt incumbent on him to mention to the House, some particulars which had come to his knowledge, respecting the conduct of revenue officers, in the mode of collecting the additional duties upon wine. He conceived there was no authority whatever, of sufficient power, legally to enforce the payments of duties about to be levied by an act of parliament, until such act had passed into law, yet he was informed, and from good authority, that upon the arrival at Leith of the ship *Peggy* belonging to Mr. Murray, laden with Spanish wines, the additional duty upon one ton of Port had been demanded and paid; he had also received a letter from Mr. Coats of Bristol, mentioning that a similar circum-

stance had happened there, where twenty eight gallons of Spanish wine, belonging to him, had been stopped in the same manner. If such circumstances had occurred, they certainly deserved the serious attention of the House, as no man could deny that they were unjustifiable in the highest degree. He thought it perfectly right that Bills, in some instances, should have a retrospective view, it was nevertheless highly dangerous to the principles of the constitution, and the liberty of the subject, for that retrospection to operate previous to the Bill being passed; it was, in fact introducing a precedent which might be made use of as an argument to justify a minister in taxing the country, by his mere personal authority, it was a grievance that called out for animadversion, and he could not forbear stating it to the House. He said, he had observed with deep concern the latitude in which ministers had indulged themselves of late in dispensing with the laws of the country, and it certainly was the incumbent duty of the House of Commons to watch their conduct with a jealous eye, and not suffer its privileges or authority to be usurped by the mere act of a minister, or their constituents to be taxed by a power less than an act of parliament.

Mr. *Rose* said, it was his duty to reply to what had been stated by the honourable gentleman. He did not mean to question the truth of what he had asserted; in fact he knew not whether any such proceedings had taken place; if they had, he could assure the honourable gentleman they were not in consequence of any order issued from the Treasury. It was not unlikely that the officers of revenue had acted as had been stated. It was undoubtedly intended, if the Bill should pass, that the duty should be levied that way.

Mr. *Grey* said, he would take the honourable gentleman's word that no directions were issued; it was nevertheless necessary not to allow the duty to be actually levied and received before the Bill had passed. He perceived by the gesture of the right honourable gentleman opposite (The Chancellor of the Exchequer) that he treated this subject lightly, he would not however suffer any precedent of this kind to be silently established, because he knew how precedents were quoted.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he did not mean to treat the subject lightly; he only made use of gesture, because the honourable gentleman had brought forth an accusation against government in a high and strong tone, without adducing any evidence whatever that government had been to blame.

Mr. *Grey* replied, that he could not be too vigilant, and if the

the honourable gentleman felt so sore upon every question that affected him, the best remedy would be, for the house to come to a vote at once of total indemnification.

General Smith said, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had attended to the candid manner in which the honourable gentleman had mentioned the business, he would not have answered him with so much acrimony.

Mr. Sheridan expressed his surprise, that the chancellor of the exchequer should take umbrage at his honourable friend's high and lofty tones; it was a mode of speech the right honourable gentleman often made use of himself, and he was perfectly competent to answer his honourable friend in the same way; he, however, supposed the chancellor of the exchequer had a patent for monopoly of high and lofty tones, and conceived that any person who should presume to make use of them besides himself, was guilty of an infringement of his exclusive right. *Mr. Sheridan* reprobated the procedure of which his honourable friend had complained. He said, he had no doubt of the facts: he had received information from Norwich of a similar circumstance. It was evident it could not be done without the order and connivance of ministers. It was not the first time complaints had been made: if the revenue officers had been reprimanded, they would not have given cause for a second complaint; their not receiving any intimation from their superiors to desist, was impliedly urging them to a repetition of their unjustifiable conduct, the blame of the transaction therefore attached to ministers and to no other persons. *Mr. Sheridan* adverted to a charge that had been brought against him, of wishing to extend the excise laws; he believed he was one of the last men against whom such a charge could with truth be alledged. He had stated it as his opinion, that the Bill in question should have contained a clause, by which the stock of private gentlemen, legislators as well as others, should be taken and made liable to the tax; and he still persisted in that opinion; he thought it peculiarly hard, that the man of property, and the member of parliament, whose fortune enabled him to lay in a large stock, should have it in his power to drink wine at a rate infinitely cheaper than the rest of the community, who only purchased a sufficient quantity of temporary consumption. As to the difficulty which was urged against taking the stock of private individuals, he conceived none existed. If government thought fit to call on every housekeeper to sign a certificate whether his maid servant had worn powder or not, he saw no reason why he should not in the same manner be called upon to certify
what

what his stock of wine was, that the new duty might take place upon it, as it would afford a greater addition to the revenue, and produce a greater equality in the tax. Notwithstanding he sincerely wished to see the exciseman entering the cellars of the legislators themselves, as well as every dealer, for the purpose of obliging them to pay the additional duty upon their stock in hand, he held his enmity to every extension of the excise laws. With respect to taxing the article of wine to that extent as almost to amount to a prohibition from using it, he had a strong objection. Such a system would defeat its own end, as few, comparatively speaking, would drink wine at the advanced price. When the Bill went into the committee, he intimated, that he should propose two amendments, one for taking the stock of private persons, and the other for inserting in the blank for the commencement of the operation of the tax, the 17th of July.

Mr. *Buxton* rose to express his disapprobation of the entry of any excise officer into a private house.

Mr. *Sheridan* repeated, that it was solely his wish that a return of the quantity of store wines should be made in the manner of the returns of the assessed taxes.

The house then went into a committee on the Bill, when, upon the question being put, that the tax should commence on the 17th day of April, 1796.

Mr. *Sheridan* opposed it, conceiving that it would bear hard on the traders who had laid in a stock, under the presumption of selling it at a certain price. To elucidate this argument, he put the case that a duty of five shillings a bottle had been laid on; in that case it amounted, he said, to a prohibition; and the traders who had laid in a stock, would be deprived of an opportunity of disposing of it. As far as the present extended, from being suddenly imposed, and bearing a retrospect, it had the same effect, and proceeded on the same principle. He contended that a reasonable notice should be given, that the trade might dispose of their stock in hand, or continue in business at their own option. He therefore moved, in amendment, that the blank be filled with a prospective date, to make the Bill commence in July.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said it was somewhat inconsistent in the honourable gentleman that he should propose this regulation, when he originally brought forward a plan to tax the private stock on hand; if his present ideas were to be adopted, the effect would be to transfer the stock in the trader's cellar, to the cellar of the individual, and unless it were taxed in that state, the Bill would be ineffectual and unproductive

tive

five for a long period. As a regulation of finance, it was absurd to think that government would ever proceed on a principle analogous to a prohibition, as it would defeat its own object. Admitting, which was by no means certain, that a tax of five shillings a bottle would be a prohibition, it was an effect dependent wholly on the degrees of the tax, and would have no application to the *quantum* at present imposed.—Was it to be contended, that no tax should be imposed without including in its regulations the means of rendering it completely abortive? Far from falling hard on the merchant or trader each would suffer no injury by the present Bill, because it was proposed, that they should pay the duty by installments, and they would have an opportunity of laying the tax on the consumer as he sold it, and as he would not be liable to be called upon to advance the sum it would make no difference to him. Supposing he had not a stock by him he must import it under precisely the same circumstances. For these reasons, he should oppose the amendment, and vote for the original period of its commencement.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, that he still retained his opinion of the propriety of applying the tax to the stock in private cellars, and meant to propose a clause to that effect, by admitting the trader to dispose of all his stock for the price in the expectation of which he was induced to lay it in; an option would be given, to which he had a right, of continuing in the trade under the new regulation or not.

The question on the amendment was then put and negatived, after which the original date (17th of April,) was agreed to and inserted.

The other clauses of the Bill then passed the committee, and the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

REAL SUCCESSION TAX.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved that the real succession tax Bill should be recommitted.

Mr. *Rasbleigh* said, that this tax was liable to the same objections which he had urged against the personal succession tax Bill. It paid no regard to the different values of the lives of persons on whom succession devolved. Considerable difficulty appeared to him likely to arise in levying the tax upon mines and fisheries, upon the whole therefore, he said, he was decidedly against it. He concluded with proposing as an amendment that, instead of the Bill being now recommitted, that it be recommitted this day three months.

Mr. *Fox* rose to oppose this stage of the Bill, and declared that he did so upon two grounds; first, the novelty of the principle,

principle, as a tax upon capital; and secondly the iniquity of the application. It was a system which if acted upon in the extent to which the principle might be carried (and he admitted the present instance to be only a slight degree) would enable the state to seize upon the whole property of the country. Of all the shapes in which despotism had ever existed, that, in his opinion, was the highest, which rendered the sovereign heir to the whole capital of the country. This he admitted the present Bill did to a very limited degree; but if the principle was once adopted, the progress was easy, and it was impossible to calculate how far it might be extended. From brothers and relations in a collateral line, it might in time reach to children, and from four or five *per cent.* the tax might be increased to ten or twelve. This was his principal objection to the Bill. He had another, however, grounded upon the particular hardship which would in certain cases attend its operations. In cases of marriage settlement, children were most frequently the objects for whom provision was made, but sometimes collateral relations had an interest in the settlement. A case of that kind had come under his own experience. In case of the death of his nephew, Lord Holland, he was to succeed to the estates of his elder brother, by an article in the marriage settlements. As it happened, he had not given any consideration for the contingent benefit of this settlement. He might, however, have paid his brother some consideration for it, and in this case, were the tax to attach upon this property, the contract would be violated, because he would not receive the value of it in the same circumstances in which it stood when he concluded the bargain. On these grounds he seconded the amendment.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he flattered himself that he should have no great difficulty in obviating the objections which had been stated against the Bill. The principle had been already recognized in the personal succession tax, and also in the duty formerly existing upon legacies. The Bill only altered the degree and regulated the mode of levying it. It had been urged that it would swallow up the whole landed capital of the country; he contended that it had no such tendency, and that it would have no such operation. This, like many other questions, was only a question of degree, and the objection, which, in reality was very limited in its force, was stated as possessing unbounded weight. It had been stated also that the tax might be paid several times over. This could not be done by the same persons; nor was it likely that it could be done by the same estate, when the chances of direct

suc-

succession were fairly calculated. In no case, however, was it a tax upon the capital; nor would it ever diminish the real value of the estate, because the tax was of such a nature that it could easily be paid by the occupier in the course of the four first years after his succession to it. As to its affecting contracts formerly made, it could have no such tendency; and in the case particularly mentioned by the right honourable gentleman, in which he was personally concerned, the tax would not attach at all. He hoped therefore that the House would agree to the Bill going into a committee.

Mr. Grey said, he had formerly stated this to be in reality a tax upon land, and that too of the worst species; he insisted that the Bill proposed a partial and bad mode of levying a land tax. The honourable gentleman had said, that it was not a tax upon the landed capital, but upon the landed income. Why, then, did he not lay it directly upon those in existence, and not upon posterity—a system of taxation which had been adopted on false principles, and had contributed more than any other cause whatever to increase the national debt? Mr. Grey contended, that it was to all intents and purposes, a tax upon the landed capital, and that it could not, in most instances, be paid by annual instalments, as had been represented. In this opinion he was confirmed by the circumstance of the general want of money among landed proprietors, for men of landed property rarely left ready money; on the contrary they were often incumbered, and in addition to these incumbrances came this tax, which would reduce the heir to the necessity of making new mortgages to discharge it. He would wish to know whether an heir of intail would be permitted to borrow; and if he was not, would not the effect of this tax involve him in embarrassments which he would be unable to acquit? He objected, chiefly, however, to the principle of the Bill, which he denied to have been sanctioned by the duties on legacies. A tax upon the capital of any country, could not fail to hurt its prosperity, and the discovery of the state of property to which the levying of the tax would necessarily lead, would in some cases be found to be impossible, and in every case would prove a source of vexation, and from the necessity of the interference of the revenue officers might become an instrument of influence to a minister over the landed gentlemen.

The Attorney General admitted the importance of the measure proposed by the Bill, and the difficulties attending it, but he owned, he did not see that the objections urged against the principle, applied to the principle as it was in the Bill reduced to practice. He repeated what had been said by his honourable

friend, that it was not a tax upon capital. It was indeed a tax upon the produce of land, but it could not be called a land tax in the proper acceptation of the word. The discovery of the state of a man's affairs was not of the dangerous tendency, nor could be used to the improper purposes alluded to it; was no greater discovery, nor so much, as was made by the public registers of every county.

Mr. *Jekyll* said, there certainly was some inconsistency in the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and those of his learned friend, for the one said that this was no tax upon land, the other confessed that in some measure it had that effect. This tax would operate as a tax upon land, and if the extraordinary expences of a ruinous war rendered it necessary to resort to new kinds of taxes, he would like to know whether the landed gentlemen would have consented to a direct increase of the land tax. With regard to the discovery that would take place, it would evidently be attended with every circumstance of publicity. It was like sending commissioners of bankruptcy to solvent persons, and taking an account of all they were worth and all they owed. Monstrous expences required monstrous expedients to support them, and such was the nature of the resources to which the country was driven.

Sir William Pulteney said, he thought this tax exceptionable. It was a direct tax upon capital, in a degree, indeed, not very severe, but such as would readily be increased, when it was thought convenient or necessary. In Holland, he believed, personal succession only was taxed, but at any rate it by no means followed that it should be adopted in this country, because it had prevailed in Holland, where the sources of revenue were exhausted, and the state felt the utmost difficulty in supporting the public expences. He thought this a worse measure than it was not general, and that it was to be paid in the four first years. It was levying in this time what might be put upon ten or twelve years, and, lest a man should die, making the most of him immediately. It had been justly said, that in the first years of a succession, the greatest expence prevailed, and that it was not very probable that the heir would, from his saving, be able to discharge the tax. It would be very hard on those who succeeded to small estates to pay the tax, much more than on great estates. It was the advantage of the taxes in this country that they were optional, or supposed to be so, and therefore sat more lightly. Here however the hardship would be more felt, because it was a tax that the person subject to it was positively obliged to pay. Upon the whole he professed himself

himself adverse to the Bill, and therefore concurred in the amendment.

The Solicitor General defended the Bill upon the same ground as the attorney general. He contended, that in Holland the principle was not confined merely to personal property. He went into a variety of legal arguments, shewing the operation of this Bill, and replying to the objections that had been made against it.

Sir W. Pulteney explained.

Mr. Basset said, that if there were no other way than by adopting this Bill to avert a national bankruptcy, he might vote for it; but not otherwise. He had heard gentlemen say, that the state of this country was such that they were under the necessity of voting for whatever taxes were proposed. So long however as a million continued to be annually appropriated to the reduction of the national debt, we could not be said to be in a situation where we must vote for every tax that should be proposed; it, therefore gave him the less reluctance in opposing the tax now proposed, as the twin Bill of this would answer for as much as was stated to be expected. If land was to be taxed, he would ask what part of land? he remembered, that, within these ten years, within the walls of that House, a pledge was given to the public to bring the lands, woods, forests, &c. of the crown to public use; and yet, after that pledge of the House of Commons, these very lands and forests were the only ones that were exempted from the operation of this Bill. He said, he could not but lament that gentlemen had not stated the provisions of this Bill, because he was persuaded they would then see that nothing could be done that would carry the purposes of the Bill into effect in many instances, except the putting the lands that were the objects of the Bill up to sale. It had been said that this was a tax of despotism; it was so in a great measure. It was a tax also from the principle of democracy.

The Solicitor General had said that a tax on the same principle as this had been adopted by the French government. It was true that they did adopt a measure of this kind in the democracy of France, but what was the consequence? They pursued it until they had got all the land into their own hands — The most manifest injustice he was persuaded would follow this Bill in the case of leasehold estates. If this Bill should pass the management of the land tax must be put into other hands, for surely those who had its present management would give it up. Was any man in that House ready to say he would put an arbitrary fine upon any man? This must be the cause

under the Bill, for how was a person accurately to estimate the value of the interest which each person had in an estate which was the object of taxation? This would create ill blood and endless animosity all over the country. Mr. Bastard said, he had heard that a man might be beat into a physician, but he did not know how to make a commissioner in every case under this act a lawyer, and yet a lawyer he must be, and a good one too, or he would never understand how to act under this Bill, for every man must be assessed according to his title. The difference between real and personal estate, as this Bill was to operate, was very great. This Bill would put down all family estates, in which consideration the constitution of the country was materially connected; for the constitution of the country and the landed interest went hand in hand; if the one were destroyed, the other would fall at the same time. Mens spirit would be broken by the Bill; for mens spirits were broken by the extreme pressure of necessity. This was the result of bad taxes. Men, formerly of independence in the country, would be brought within the vortex of the metropolis, adopt its vices, apply to, and become the tools of government for a livelihood; a practice much too prevalent at present, and which our ancestors regarded as the wages of corruption, and the grave of their independence.

Lord Sheffield said, he thought the Bill odious and preposterous. A more partial tax, he insisted, could not be imagined. It had been said, that the funds should not be touched, but in preference to the present tax, he would recommend a stamp on the transfer of stock.

Mr. Morris Robinson inveighed against the principle and the provisions of the Bill.

General Smith contended that the many strong appellations given at different times to the convention of France, applied to the present measure. As the right honourable gentleman had thought its conduct worthy of imitation, he should not be surprised to see the lawyers on the other side of the House recommend the adoption of mandates.

Mr. Alderman Newnham reprobated the present Bill, which, with the tax on collateral successions, he said, he had no doubt would be found so odious, that some future administration would be obliged to submit to their repeal.

Mr. Hawkins Browne defended the Bill, contending, that it could not come under the denomination of an act to enforce an additional land tax. To the latter he had the strongest objection, as he was persuaded, it would be dangerous in the extreme, since it must lead to that equality which there was so much

much reason to dread. The House was called on in justice to pass the present Bill, as it had the other; and for these reasons he would vote for the re-commitment.

The House divided on the re-commitment,

Ayes,

Noes,

65

24

Majority,

41

The committee then went through the whole of the Bill, and made many amendments in it. The question being put that the chairman should leave the chair.

General Smith said, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been very ill advised to bring this measure forward, for he would now distress every family in the kingdom for the paltry consideration to the revenue of 100,000*l.* a year.

The chairman then quitted the chair. The house being resumed, the report was received immediately, and the further consideration of it was ordered to stand for Monday the ninth instant, and in the mean time, the Bill, with the amendments, was ordered to be printed.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, May 6.

Received fifteen Bills from the Commons, and read those on the table.

The Earl of Guildford deferred his intended motion to a future day, of which he said, he should give previous notice.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, May 6.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Two masters in Chancery brought down a message from the Lords, signifying that their lordships had agreed to the new loan bill, without any amendment.

PUBLIC PAPERS.

Mr. Dundas moved, that the India accounts, No. 1, 2, and 14, presented to the House, be withdrawn, they being found erroneous, and that others be substituted in their place. Agreed to.

Mr. Dundas then presented to the House, certain papers relative

relative to the West Indies, copies of which, sufficient for the use of the members, were ordered to be printed.

HAY AND STRAW.

The Bill for regulating the sale of hay and straw, within certain limits therein mentioned, was read a third time; but, upon the motion of Mr. *Maintwaring*, a clause by way of rider was proposed, which went through a committee, and was ordered to stand part of the Bill.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* in this committee of supply, moved that 146,000*l.* and upwards, be granted to his majesty, for the in-house pensioners at Chelsea College. The resolution was then put and agreed to. He then moved for 6000*l.* for another service, which sum was also granted, and the report was ordered to be brought up next day.

WAYS AND MEANS.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, in the committee of ways and means, moved, that towards making good the supply granted to his majesty, the sum of 3,500,000*l.* be taken from the consolidated fund for that purpose. Report to-morrow.

WET DOCKS.

The second reading of the Wet Docks Bill standing as the order of the day,

Mr. *Manning* moved, that the order be discharged, and that the Bill be read a second time on Friday the thirteenth instant. Agreed to.

CORN.

Mr. *Lechmere* said, as he perceived that gentlemen were wishing with great anxiety for the motion which his honourable friend Mr. Grey was to make, he should once more defer the motion which he had intended to bring forward respecting corn and flour. At the same time, he could not but take that opportunity of declaring, that the object of his own motion was as considerable and important to the public as any that could come before the house; in order, however, to comply with the high expectation of gentlemen for the discussion of another subject, he should for the present postpone his motion.

The committee on the high price of corn was then deferred until Wednesday the eleventh instant.

THE LONGITUDE.

The Bill for rewarding and encouraging persons making useful discovery in the longitude, went through a committee of the whole House, and the report was ordered to be brought up on Monday the ninth instant.

IMPEACHMENT OF THE CONDUCT OF MINISTERS.

Mr. Grey said, that to those who reflected upon the unexampled power which the present ministers possessed, and the little disposition the House discovered to inquire into any part of their conduct; and that on the contrary, the House manifested a disposition of the most unlimited confidence, it might appear a vain endeavour to bring against them any charge of mal-administration, especially such a charge as would form the ground of articles of impeachment.—Aware as he was of these difficulties, and the little encouragement he had to submit to the House any propositions conveying a censure upon the conduct of ministers; nay, despairing of that concurrence which would give it effect, he felt it his duty not to allow the House to separate, with little probability too of again meeting, without drawing their attention to a few plain intelligible points of the highest importance. He would call upon them to examine the public expences, he would demonstrate to them that ministers had grossly misapplied the money of their constituents, and had been guilty of a flagrant violation of the laws of the land, to conceal which they had laid before the House, an account of the distributions of the various grants, which he would prove to be completely false. A minute attention to the public expenditure and accounts, was the most important duty which the House could exercise. The power of the purse was the best security for the liberties of the people, and the House could not allow it to be encroached upon without betraying their most sacred trust, and renouncing their most valuable privilege. These principles he believed would not be disputed in argument, and surely the duty was rendered more important, and the necessity more urgent, by the magnitude of the expence which they had to superintend and to controul. It would indeed be a melancholy consideration if, amidst all the influence by which they were overborne, the very magnitude of the public expence, crippled the exertions of the constitutional guardians, and contributed to defeat and to disappoint all inquiry.

If the House was aware of this, and was anxious to maintain the privileges they had received from their ancestors, they would, by a proper application of them, confirm the transmitted

mitted right, and deliver it entire to their posterity. He had heard gentlemen, on various occasions, particularly on the subject of the game laws, express a determined resolution to preserve that system for which their ancestors had fought and bled, and he hoped that the present instance would be felt no less important, and the principle no less necessary. The charges that he meant, on this occasion, to bring against his Majesty's ministers would reduce themselves to one plain, simple, intelligent proposition, namely, that they usurped a power to beat down and contravene law, by disregarding grants of the legislature, and applying the money so voted otherwise than was directed and designed by the vote. He called therefore solemnly on the House to declare whether in the plenitude of ministerial authority, they meant to include this dispensing power, which held at nought the injunctions of law, and either disobeyed, or acted in opposition to them, as opinion or design might suggest? Such was the matter of charge that he felt himself bound to produce, in its nature so clear and significant, that every man must understand it, and feel himself compelled to admit the conclusion he meant to draw.

If they found the money of their constituents misapplied, would they suffer it to pass unnoticed? If they saw the law openly violated, would they insist upon no satisfaction? If they found the principles of the constitution outraged, would they express no indignation and demand no atonement? The instances upon which he was particularly to dwell, were selected from a great many others which he might have taken up; but he had confined himself to these on account of their plainness and simplicity. They were such as all might understand, and the inferences from them were such as all who understood must acknowledge. He had not brought forward the incapacity ministers had evinced, the failures they had incurred, nor the multiplied disasters, which, in the course of a ruinous war, had pursued them. He would not comment upon their gross mismanagement of the public money where the application was within their discretion; but he would confine himself to three distinct charges.—First, that ministers had violated the express stipulations of an act of parliament called the Appropriation Act, by applying grants to other services than those for which they were designed and voted. Second, That they had presented false accounts to the House, in order to conceal that infraction of the law. And, lastly, their having violated another act brought in since the right honourable gentleman had a seat in parliament, for regulating the office of Paymaster General of the Forces. He requested the House

House to attend, that there was an act passed every session after the grants for the use of the year were made, by which certain sums were appropriated to certain services, and which ministers were prohibited to divert to any other purpose. With this solemn act of parliament, the House surely could not allow ministers to dispense. The grants for the army, the ordnance, the cloathing, the pay of general and staff officers, were subject to the distribution expressly provided in the act. By a paper upon the table, he would shew that in reality the act had in the instances enumerated been disregarded, and that the sums were not applied to the purpose for which they were voted, and in the manner parliament directed. By an account laid before the House on the twenty-first of April, it appeared that the money issued for the cloathing of the army, was not applied to that purpose, and that there was due to several colonels or commanding officers of his Majesty's forces, the sum of 644,106l. 7s. 6d. for net off- reckonings and cloathing for the years of 1794 and 1795, and the sum of 146,900l. 12s. 4d. to general and staff officers, for 1793, 1794, and 1795, and the sum of 34,313l. 13. 3d. to governors and lieutenant governors for the years 1794 and 1795, though these sums were strictly appropriated by act of parliament. It also appeared from the account alluded to, that the sum of 31,056l. 3d. due to the general and staff officers of his Majesty's forces, for the year 1794, was paid out of the grants made for the year 1796. There, he said, was the Act of Appropriation; let the House read it, and there also were the accounts, which ministers themselves had laid on the table; let them read them, and then compare one with the other.

Much as ministers were accustomed to explanation and excuse, he could not but conceive that it would be difficult to answer the imputation arising from those facts, which could not be disputed: which were before them upon record, and upon their table. Under these circumstances, the house would not, he thought, be soon satisfied, or put up with vague explanation and trivial excuse. It was a direct and glaring breach of law, proved by documents produced by those against whom the charge was made. No species of convenience could surely be admitted as an adequate excuse, nothing less than an imperious necessity would amount to such a defence; nor under the present circumstances, would that amount to a justification; even supposing they were influenced by that overruling authority, they were in duty bound to come as early as it was in their power to the house, and state the necessity by

which they had been impelled, and had asked for a bill of indemnity. Such in common fair dealing, if any necessity really existed, was the conduct that the house had a right to expect, and the constitution, by such a deportment, would not have suffered the violation it had experienced. On the contrary, how, in fact, had ministers acted on the occasion? They had endeavoured to conceal the infraction of law by deceiving the house; and by a false account, calculated to impose, they had increased, instead of diminishing, the enormity of the original offence, the wilful infraction of a positive law. It might be said in defence, that all former administrations had followed the practice, and that they were justified by uniform precedent. That the pernicious practice of extending the public expence beyond the sums voted upon estimate, had sometimes prevailed, was true, but nothing without the reprehension of parliament. In the year 1711, in Queen Anne's time, by a resolution of the House of Commons, a practice of the present nature was reprobated as an invasion of the rights of the House and expressly condemned by the House, nor could the act of appropriation be at all reconciled with the authority of a practice that it was expressly intended to prevent.

It was said, however, that extraordinaries were unavoidable, but if the proposition was admitted, it was to be qualified by the degree in which they were really necessary. When a fair account of past expences was stated, and a tolerable estimate formed of future services, the necessity of extraordinaries would in a great measure be superseded. He would ask, whether the minister, to whom the House was so unboundedly liberal in granting supplies, with a vote of credit to the extent of 2,500,000*l.* might not have made such an estimate of the demands of the public service, as would have left little to be answered by extraordinary expences? The sum required for extraordinaries was not only in itself necessarily limited by the degree in which good management and prudent foresight would require it, but also by the precedents of former times.

In the reign of Queen Anne, when the army was conducted by a person not much distinguished for œconomy, and with a continental war wide and expensive, the extraordinaries scarce exceeded the sum of 200,000*l.* might he not then ask if the practice of extravagant charges on the head of extraordinaries had not extended of late without the consent of parliament? A person of high credit (Mr. Hatfield) coolly reflecting upon the subject in his closet, says, in his book of precedents, that during the American war nothing could exceed the negligence

of

of the House in not limiting the sums charged under the head of extraordinaries. Yet, however, respectable this authority might be, he could produce still higher, that of the report of the committees of the House appointed to investigate the public accounts. In 1782 the committee stated the sums for extraordinaries as extravagant beyond necessity, and comparing the different circumstances of both periods, there was nothing in the present that could require a higher sum for extraordinary services. But the practice of charging extravagant sums on this head was arraigned by the honourable gentleman himself at the end of the American war with the utmost severity; yet now his adherents were fain to defend him upon those precedents which he had so vehemently reprobated, the extravagance of which had been so far surpassed during his administration. A defence like this, however, would little avail the House; a minister who was ushered into the conduct of public affairs as the hope of the nation, as the reformer of abuses, as the declared foe of the system to which he succeeded! It was said that money must sometimes be taken from the estimated services, to be applied to urgent services. This justification, however, only amounted to this, that when money was to be diverted, it was necessary to come forward and apply, to the arrears so incurred, the extraordinaries of the next year. But, in the present instance, the original deviation from the rule had not been atoned for even in this manner; as it appeared from the account on the table, that great sums were still due to general and staff-officers and governors of garrisons, for the year 1794. Upon the principle of the justification pleaded, these sums should have been defrayed by the extraordinaries of of next year. It was to be seen, likewise, whether the same thing had not occurred in the year 1795?--By papers upon the table it appeared, that, up to the 21st of April, 1796, for the quarter preceding, eight millions of the grants of the current year had been expended; and still these arrears remained due up to the present period.

It was in its own nature impossible to set up a justification to an act of parliament, made on purpose to restrain ministers in this very instance other than that of an imperious public necessity; in that case, if it had occurred, ministers were bound to come to the house, and lay the whole matter before them; and if they would allow the necessity set up, they would follow it with an act of indemnity. From these fundamental propositions, he concluded that the defence set up, supposing it true, neither justified nor excused in the present instance, where no disclosure of those circumstances had been made to

the house, from which, on the contrary, the fact itself had been carefully concealed, and false statements presented: and, such as they were, every argument now advanced in favour the present minister was as forcible in 1782, when the practice was so strongly condemned by him. The defence of ministers for the misapplication of the sums appropriated by acts of parliament was not valid, therefore *upon their own principles*; for which reason he would, on this head, submit to the house the following resolutions:

Resolved, I. "That at all times, and under all circumstances, it is the indispensable duty of the House of Commons vigilantly to superintend the expenditure of the public money, and strictly to inquire into the application of the grants made by parliament to the service for which they have been voted.

Resolved II. "That by an act passed in every session of parliament, the particular sums granted for each particular service are specified, and the money that shall be paid into the exchequer is appropriated to their discharge; and that it is strictly directed, that such aids and supplies shall not be applied to any use, intent, or purpose whatever, other than the uses and purposes mentioned in the said act.

Resolved III. "That it appears from an account presented to this House on the 21st of April, 1796, that the sum of 644,106l. 7s. 9d. was then due to the several colonels or commanding officers of his majesty's forces, for net off-reckonings and cloathing for the years 1794 and 1795, although by acts passed in 1794 and 1795, money was granted to discharge the same; and although the said acts direct that the money so granted shall be applied in discharge of the same, and not otherwise.

Resolved IV. "That it appears from an account presented to this House on the 21st of April, 1796, that the sum of 146,900l. 12s. 4d. is now due to the general and staff-officers of his majesty's forces for the years 1793, 1794, and 1795, although by acts passed in the said years, money was granted for payment of the said sum; and although the said acts direct that the said money so granted shall be applied in discharge of the said sum, and not otherwise.

Resolved V. "That it appears from an account presented to this House on the twenty-first of April, 1796, that the sum of 34,313l. 13s. 3d. is now due to the several governors, lieutenant governors, and other officers of his majesty's forces and garrisons in Great Britain and parts beyond the seas for the years 1794 and 1795, although, by acts passed in the said years, money was granted for discharging the said sum; and although the said acts direct that the money so granted shall be applied in discharging the said sum; and not otherwise.

Resolved VI. "That it appears from an account presented to this House the twenty-first day of April 1796, that the sum of 31,056l. 0s. 3d. due to the general and staff-officers of his majesty's forces for the year 1794 was paid out of grants for the service of the year 1796, although by an act passed in 1794, money was granted for discharging the said sum; and although the said money so granted shall be applied in discharging the same and not otherwise."

The

The next part of the resolutions regarded the application of sums granted for the service of the year 1796 to the arrears of services in 1794 and 1795. A resolution was passed in the year 1784, which he wished to be read at the end of his speech, but at present he should state the substance of it:—"left a dissolution of parliament, which was expected, should take place before the act of appropriation was passed, the House resolved, that any minister misapplying the funds at that time granted should be guilty of a high misdemeanor." This resolution was consistent with the true principles of the constitution. The application of the grants of 1796 to retrospective services was an evident violation of the spirit of the House in voting the supplies, and fell under the resolution of the House of Commons, which he had already referred to, and the original fault of which they had been guilty, ministers had followed up with a still farther violation of the law. He would therefore upon this point move this resolution:

Resolved VII. "That it appears from an account produced to this House on the twenty-first of April 1796, that the sum of 172,100*l.* due for off-reckonings, to the 24th of December, 1794, and which remained due on the twenty-first of January, 1796, was discharged out of the vote of credit granted for the the express purpose of defraying expences that may occur in 1796. By an act passed in 1794, money was granted for discharging the said sum; and although the said act directs that the money so granted shall be applied in discharge of the same and not otherwise."

There had also been other acts besides those mentioned equally violated. In 1782, in compliance with many petitions for reform, a design of reform was taken up, he hoped not merely to amuse the country, but a serious plan of reform, especially in the public offices; for this purpose an act was passed for regulating the office of paymaster general of the forces, which being inefficient, from some defect in its construction, was repealed, and a new one for the same purpose, and on the same principle, was passed under the administration of the right honourable gentleman himself. This act was intended both to remedy the evils arising from balances remaining in the hands of the paymaster general, and to secure the regular payment of the army, and this too had been openly violated. In the first account of the application of the vote of credit of 1796, to which he requested the particular attention of the House, the sum of 430,000*l.* had been issued to the paymaster-general, of which a balance of 83,300*l.* was still in his hands. The House had been informed, on a former occasion, that

that this money, though stated in the account, was in reality sent to the bank, where the balance remained. Being suspicious of the information which ministers might think fit sometimes to give in that House, he had made inquiries of a person well qualified to tell him, and he had discovered that in reality, the sum alluded to had been put into the hands of the paymaster general himself, and with him the balance was lodged. The provisions of the Bill were explicit, that all sums issued for the payment of the army, should be sent to the bank, and there paid by drafts from the paymaster general, distinctly specifying the service in which it was incurred. This provision had not been complied with, for the money had been first issued into the hands of the paymaster general himself, and with him the balance remained. Such was the fact. And as the conclusions were too obvious to require argument, there he would leave it for the determination of the House. With regard to the accumulation of balance in the hands of the paymaster general, the act provided that the sums appropriated for the cloathing of the army, should be issued periodically, it was, however, proved by the account on the table, that from midsummer 1794, to December 1795, no money was issued for this service, and part of the arrears were discharged from the supplies of the current year. What ever might be thought of the minister's defence, as to his violation of the account of the appropriation act, here he would be forced to recur to a new ground of exculpation. Since it was passed, public affairs had been conducted by no other minister; there was no example to plead, no precedent to sanction. Ministers had, in open defiance of the act, withheld the money from the service to which it was destined, and endeavoured to discharge the arrears by the supplies of the current year, without attempting to account for the application of the sum originally diverted. He would propose the following resolutions:

Resolved VIII. "That it appears to this house, that by an act passed in the 23d year of his majesty's reign, for the better regulation of the office of paymaster-general of his majesty's forces, it is enacted that no money for the service of the army shall be issued from his majesty's exchequer to the paymaster general of his majesty's forces or shall be placed or directed to be placed in his majesty's hands or possession; but the same shall be issued and directed to be paid to the governor and company of the bank of England, to be placed to his account.

Resolved IX. "That it appears to this house, from an account produced on the 22d of April, 1796, that in open contempt and defiance to the said act, the sum of 430,200*l.* has been issued directly to the paymaster general of his majesty's

forces

forces in exchequer bills on the vote of credit for 1796; and that a balance of 23,000*l.* was remaining unissued in his hands on the said 22d of April 1796.

Resolved X. "That it further appears to this house, that, by the said act, the paymaster general of his majesty's forces is directed and required to form his memorials and requisitions to the treasury, and to issue his drafts upon the governor and company upon the bank of England, upon the 24th of June and 24th of December in every year, in equal payments, to such person or persons as have a regular assignment from the several colonels, lieutenant-colonels, commandants, majors, and captains commandant, and captains, for the monies appropriated for the clothing of the non-commissioned officers and private men of his majesty's regular forces.

Resolved XI. "That it appears to this House, that the sums of money appropriated for the clothing of his majesty's regular forces, and which, according to the provisions of the said act, ought to have been issued on the 24th of December, 1794, the 24th of June, and 24th December, 1795, had been directed to other purposes, and still remained due on the 1st of January, 1796, in open contempt and defiance of the said act.

With regard to the disposition paper, which was the last topick on which he would touch, the practice of laying before the House such a document had originated in the extravagant reign of Charles II. and had been adopted and established at the revolution, when our liberties were fixed, and was intended as a real account for the information of parliament how the supplies were employed. This paper he now arraigned as completely false. It might be said by the minister, that his predecessors had not been very careful to render this paper an exact account of the application of the public money. This was at all times a bad defence; but what was the house to think of the present minister, resorting as a justification to precedents which he had been the foremost to condemn, and abuses which he pledged himself to remedy? The paper stated that the sums voted for the army, cloathing, staff, &c. had been issued and applied, when none had been issued on this account, and when that branch of the service was still in arrear. The House indeed might be told that this paper was merely a form; that it only contained an account of the sums issued from the exchequer; and that under this form the paymaster general received from the treasury the sums required; but were they tamely to acquiesce in such a defence? would they endure that the minister should apply the public money as he thought proper, in defiance of solemn enactments of the legislature, or that he should abolish the regulations which the wisdom of the constitution had deemed necessary to maintain the vigour of its principles, and secure the purity of its administration? Instead
of

of thus insulting the understanding of the House, instead of imposing upon them a false and fraudulent account, the minister should have made atonement to the spirit of the constitution, had necessity driven him from the strict line of conduct which it prescribed, and by a bill of indemnity satisfied the demands of its violated laws. He would therefore move his last resolutions—

Resolved XII. "That it appears, that an account is annually presented to this House, shewing how the money granted for the service of the preceding year has been disposed of, distinguished under the several heads, and the parts remaining unsatisfied, with the deficiency thereupon.

Resolved XIII. "That such account was intended to be, what in its title it professes to be, a real account, shewing how the money given for the service of the year had actually been disposed of, in order that the House of Commons might be informed of the state of the public expenditure, and satisfy themselves as to the application of the money voted to those services for which it had been granted by them.

Resolved XIV. "That an account of the above description has been presented to this House in each of the years 1794, 1795, and 1796, in which the money granted for the services of each year is stated to have been applied to the services for which it was voted by parliament, although it now appears, from accounts since presented to this House, that the sum of 644,106l. granted for off-reckonings for the years 1794 and 1795; the sum 146,900l. granted for the pay of the general and staff officers of his majesty's forces for 1793, 1794, 1795; the sum of 34,313l. granted for the pay of the several governors, lieutenant governor, and other officers of his majesty's forces in Great Britain and parts beyond seas, for the years 1794 and 1795, and severally stated to have been disposed of for those services, still remain unsatisfied.

Resolved XV. "That, in the instances above mentioned, his majesty's ministers have been guilty of presenting false accounts, calculated to mislead the judgment of this House, of a flagrant violation of various acts of parliament, and of a gross misapplication of the public money."

Here then he would at present leave the consideration of the subject. He had laid before the House an important case for their decision. They were now to determine whether they would enforce the act of appropriation of the public revenue to its proper service, and preserve the spirit of their laws in the strictness of their application, or allow the dispensing power of a minister to supersede the authority of the law, and the discretion of the executive power to supplant the wisdom of the constitution.

The Speaker having read the first resolution from the chair, The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that he felt a considerable

derable degree of satisfaction at the measure which the honourable gentleman had then brought forward, and on which he had grounded specific charges against his majesty's ministers. He was happy in being afforded an opportunity of discussing regularly and precisely, certain topics which had been loosely thrown out at other times, when business of great importance pressed upon the attention of the House. However strong the points which the honourable gentleman had urged, however strong the case which he had put, he still hoped that he should prove to the satisfaction of the House, to the satisfaction of the honourable gentleman himself, and to that of his personal friends, among whom he should be happy to reckon the honourable gentleman, that conceding to him as much as he should afterwards state of the principle, conceding also most of the facts, still he should be able to prove, that it would be impossible for him, or for the House, to draw that conclusion which he had then drawn, and which he had proposed to the House to draw, by his present resolution; and what might seem, perhaps, a little singular, he contended that even though the principle should be considered, *prima facie*, just, yet the House could not, with common justice, or with common fairness, vote the resolution proposed. If the resolution stated an indisputable truth, the question then would be, whether it were expedient to record the truth. The resolution stated that at all times, and under all circumstances, it was the indispensable duty of the House of Commons vigilantly to superintend the expenditure of the public money, and strictly to inquire into the application of the grants made by parliament to the service for which they had been voted. That it was the duty of the House of Commons vigilantly to superintend the expenditure of the public money, he did not presume to deny; but that it was the duty of parliament strictly to enforce the application of it to the letter of the act, required the command of a retrospective authority, which the House had not the means of enforcing; and this he proposed to shew under the examination of the several heads of the honourable gentleman's arguments, in the manner he arranged them.

With respect to the act of appropriation, on which the hon. gentleman had dwelt, he agreed that it contained a strong clause, which passed every year, and which enjoined, "that no money granted by parliament should be applied to any other purpose than that for which it had been granted." He agreed that the act of appropriation did apply, in binding and specific terms, to the regulation of the payment of navy and army services; of the navy, by stating its services under the head of a general fund; of the army, under various and distinct heads,

—"so much for guards and garrisons, so much for plantations, Chelsea, &c. &c." He admitted also, that his majesty's ministers, in the management and payment of army services, did not attend to the minute sub-divisions particularly mentioned in the act of appropriation, they only generally took care, that no more should be issued for the army out of the supplies in the course of the year, than the total amount of the sum for which general credit had been given. That this was a deviation from the strict letter of that law he admitted; it was a deviation in the particular subdivisions of the army services. Gentlemen should however, recollect a fact, for which he contended, viz. that the act had been precisely in the same form, in the last and present year, and in every year since he came into office, in which it had passed in the reign of George I. and in which it had continued down to the present day. They should recollect, that something of the same nature, though not exactly the same, existed in the reign of King William; and that so early as the reign of Queen Anne, it was deviated from in as strong a degree, affecting the principle, as during the present war. This had been mentioned by a very respectable authority, the author of the precedents of parliament, and by him in a great measure justified, because the nation was then engaged in a war of great extent, with services in all parts of the globe; and that it was impossible to foresee what might be the amount of all the various expences.

The question then, which the House had to consider at present, was, whether it followed, from the particular breach of the act, which he had admitted in certain instances; whether, in deviating from its express provisions to that extent, the present ministers deserved the imputation of criminality, which the honourable gentleman had stated; and whether their conduct called for and justified the censure of the House? Undoubtedly, every deviation from an act of parliament was, *prima facie*, criminal; it did not, however, follow that there was no excuse, palliation, or justification of that deviation from the law. It was an easy task to make a charge of the present nature. It was only necessary for a gentleman to point the attention of the House to the letter of the law, and when the deviation from it should be admitted, he would immediately have recourse to condemnation; but surely the honourable gentleman would allow the persons charged to ask, whether the deviation were wanton, or arose from necessity. Secondly, if the deviation were new and unprecedented, or whether it were founded on ancient practice? Or, thirdly, whether it were clandestine,

time, or done with an intent to deceive the House; or whether it was wrong under its notice, and sanctioned by its decisions?

He would, he said, first consider the necessity of the case: he found it had been admitted, that some extraordinaries could not be avoided in time of war; the honourable gentleman had said, that the question was only as to the degree, but if there was ever a time when extraordinaries were allowable to a large extent, it would be in so extensive a war as the present. With respect to the comparative extent of the extraordinaries of the present war with those of former wars, he should come to state that afterwards, he did not find it necessary to mention it on the question of principle. If it were allowed that extraordinaries were ever necessary, he would not wish for any other jury than the gentlemen of the opposition to judge him; nay, if the honourable gentleman who made the motion were called as a jurymen, he should not challenge him. If extraordinary services were unavoidably necessary to be incurred in the course of a war, and that from their nature they could not be provided for, nor foreseen in their amount nor in their time, they must, when they were performed, be paid for; how then was the money to be paid, but by withholding some of the payments of the services regularly estimated and voted for, which, according to the strict act of appropriation, ought to be applied to the particular services only for which they were voted? That was simply the whole of the subject, as far as it related to the principle; and from the times of King William and Queen Anne, a full century, there had not been a year of war in which extraordinary expences had not been incurred, which had not been previously provided for by parliament; nay more, for near half a century past, there had not been one year of peace in which extraordinaries had not been paid, and by that means the act of appropriation violated. With respect therefore to principle and necessity, he had not much further to urge, if it were possible to have only as small extraordinaries as those of former times; if it were possible to have no extraordinaries all in time of peace; still it was impossible that a case could be put, in time of war, when the public service could be wisely or prudently conducted consistently with the strict letter of the act of appropriation.

If gentlemen would for a moment consider the uncertain events and operations of war, the different views of policy arising from circumstances daily changing in the course of a year; if they would consider that it might be sometimes necessary to maintain perhaps a large army on the Continent, which, be-
fore

fore the end of the year, it might be advisable to send to the immediate defence of our plantations; and if gentlemen would also consider that the same army in different situations was placed under separate and distinct heads of service, apportioned and limited in the appropriation act, "so much for guards and garrisons, and so much for plantations;" under such circumstances, and with a comprehensive and just view of the subject, gentlemen must confess that it would but ill accord with the public service to fetter the operations of the year by binding them down to the strict letter of the act, passed at a time when without the spirit of prophecy, it would be impossible to judge precisely of the proper limitations. Suppose then a war breaks out in the plantations, and parliament not sitting at the time, a larger force would be required there than in the guards or garrisons at home, and government would be obliged to send additional supplies, and consequently incur a greater charge for extraordinaries. In that case he trusted he should not pay too great a compliment to the honourable gentleman's candour, if he asserted that the honourable gentleman himself would admit the necessity of having troops sent there and all extraordinaries paid. It was hardly possible for any thing useful and expedient to be done, though short of necessity, without a deviation from the rigid letter of the law, and yet the honourable gentleman had bound ministers down expressly to that letter, merely for the purpose of bringing a charge of condemnation against them, although the public welfare depended solely upon that deviation.

Thus then he had already stated the practice; he had said, that in years of peace universally for half the present century, extraordinaries were incurred. He was willing to allow that the practice existed formerly in sums far short, but, however, in sums not so small as the honourable gentleman stated, for instead of 200,000*l.* which he had stated to be the utmost extent, he would find, that in the course of the war in the reign of Queen Anne, between 300,000*l.* and 400,000, were incurred in the article of extraordinaries for the army; even taking it, however, at the honourable gentleman's statement, it was sufficient to give him the benefit of pleading precedent in justification.

In the war of 1740 and 1741, which terminated in the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, extraordinaries had been also incurred to a great amount. In the German war they had considerably increased; and in the American war, so recent in the recollection of this country, that line of service had increased to a much larger extent than it had ever done before. But

although

although the sum of 300,000*l.* or 400,000*l.* may not, in a comparative scale with the amount of the extraordinaries in the present war, appear large, yet, if gentlemen would take into the account the comparative value of money in those times, when considered with its present value, the House would perceive that there was something more to be deduced than mere precedent; and that the present extraordinaries might be justified also by the comparative amount of those in the reign of Queen Anne. During the administration of a man whom the hon. gentleman would certainly not object against, a man of public spirit and pure patriotism, during the administration of Mr. Pelham, when the finances of the war were directed by a person who had been trained for other great, eminent, and important stations, who filled with honour, dignity, and respect the chair of Speaker of the House of Commons; it would be found that during his administration the expences were paid in a way different from that which was expressly mentioned in the act of appropriation, and the ministers of that day were equally justified by the necessity of the public service. He did not, however, wish to rest upon the silent acquiescence of parliament in the practice of neglecting the letter of the act so often mentioned: there occurred a marked and particular instance in which he had the recorded judgment of parliament on that subject. The members of the administration of that day had a vote of censure proposed against them for the payment of an extraordinary service, and the vote was proposed in terms not very different from the resolutions proposed by the honourable gentleman on the present day. On the 19th of March, 1763, during the administration of Lord Wilmington, notice was taken in the account of extraordinaries, of a sum to the amount of 40,000*l.* for the purpose of putting the Austrian troops in motion, under the command of the Duc d'Henberg. In the motion proposed to the House, it was stated as "a dangerous misapplication of the public money, and destructive of the rights of parliament," the merits of the motion were not then decided on, for the previous question was moved and carried on a division; but the papers were produced to prove the importance of the services performed; and on the 10th of April, 1744, the motion was again urged, when an amendment was offered for leaving out the words "that the expenditure of that sum was a dangerous misapplication of the public money," and substituting the words "that it was necessary for the common cause." The House divided upon the original question, when the *Ayes* were 145, and the *Noes* 259, and the father of the honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Fox) was
teller

teller for the *Ayes*. So it happened that this practice, which the House was now called upon to brand as criminal, had been known every year, had been brought forward every year, had been avowed and recognized every year; the accounts of the extraordinaries of the army were presented, and every gentleman who voted for them, knew that the act of appropriation of the year before must have been departed from in the payment of them. Would gentlemen pretend to say, or could they have imagined, that the extraordinary service could wait for payment until the subsequent session? Extraordinaries, which consisted of Bills of exchange drawn from abroad, payable at a certain time, at the expiration of which they must positively be discharged. If, therefore, for 50 or 60 years past there were extraordinaries incurred, and incurred certainly contrary to the letter of the various acts of appropriation which had passed in that time; if the House of Commons had been so far a party to those transactions, as to sanction them, by their votes, to make good the payment of these extraordinaries, from the accession of George I. to that day, would the honourable gentleman himself, if every other member in the House was to withdraw, and he was singly to decide upon the merits of the question, would he deal out justice to the ministers of the present day, by condemning them for doing that which parliament had constantly and repeatedly done? Would he censure ministers, and not parliament? Would he, instead of placing the charge upon the House, lay it on those, who thinking, from the practice of parliament, that they were justified in their act, merely carried measures into execution which were repeatedly recognized by the legislature? It might be pretended, that formerly parliament gave only a kind of negative assent; but when the honourable gentleman considered the report of 1782, made by the committee, which stated the practice of extraordinaries as a grievance to the House, from the time of that report, he had a right to state, that the House had not then tacitly and indirectly, but directly and expressly, by every vote of extraordinaries from that time, recognized the principle of that head of public expenditure.

It had also been the practice of individuals connected with the honourable gentleman (certainly there was an exception in respect to the honourable gentleman himself, who had not found it necessary as yet to state to the House, what he should think it necessary to propose in laying on the public burdens, and in regulating the expenditure of the different services.) A right honourable gentleman near him (Mr. Fox), who had

once

once been in office, and now made one of that formidable opposition ranged over against him, knew something of the practice of extraordinaries; he did not mean to state that the right honourable gentleman had a situation which made him particularly responsible in the question of finance; but as in the present motion the honourable gentleman thought fit to shift the charge off his shoulders as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to place it conjointly on him and his colleagues in office, so the practice of extraordinaries, on the same principle, would form a charge against that right honourable gentleman whilst in administration, though he was not Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the general words of the present motion, he said there was an excess of candour for which the honourable gentleman was entitled to his sincere thanks, as it gave him a right to bring the right honourable gentleman, not as his judge, but as a witness to bear testimony on his behalf, to prove that in the year 1782, and a great part of the year 1783, when the two persons were paymasters-general who brought in the act relating to the pay-office, there were extraordinaries to the amount of many millions voted and paid. Thus had he a living witness of the practice in the person of his opponents. He had one witness, however, more singular than all the rest, not a living, speaking authority, but a dumb, a dead one, the authority he meant was the act of appropriation itself; upon the letter of which the hon. gentleman sought for his condemnation. Part of that act was, to make good several millions of extraordinaries. The act of appropriation contained, he said, in the body of it, a sum to make good deficiencies arising from the payment of extraordinaries, and therefore that act of parliament which recorded in itself the annual breach of its own provisions, afforded also a vindication of that practice which was that night stated as a crime in his majesty's ministers.

He had not, however, quite done with acts of parliament on that question: he would recite in his vindication the Pay-Office act, which was brought in by Mr. Burke after the report of the committee in 1782, and which act was afterwards amended by Colonel Barre. The report had stated that the practice of incurring army extraordinaries ought to be put an end to; and the act of parliament stated the precise time, and the form, in which the paymaster-general was to keep an account of the extraordinary expences not provided for by parliament. Thus had he stated the second act of parliament, which proved on the face of it, that there had been extraordinaries. How then did the question stand? He had proved it

to be the practice for above a century of ministers, living and dead; and recognized by the act on which the charge was founded. There was one circumstance more, he must be allowed to refer once more to an authority, the same work which he had mentioned before, he meant that on the precedents of parliament, which had certainly stated, in very strong terms, the objection to the amount and principle of extraordinaries. In a page of the third volume of it was stated, that in the year 1782, the army estimates not having been voted before Christmas, it was found that the whole credit was exhausted, and that it would not be possible to pay the subsistence of the army for the month of December for that year. It was upon mature deliberation and consultation, judged necessary that a sum should be voted upon the army account, in order to give the paymaster of the army a credit, to entitle the minister, during the recess, to reserve it on account of extraordinaries, and to increase the credit of the army beyond what was given for the regular services, as stated in the act of appropriation, and that was not done so much to make good the expence which had been incurred as to enable the Exchequer to make advances when necessity required it. He wished, he said, that the House would consider that uniformly received practice, established by, and arising from a series of transactions. That they would consider that the material part of the act of appropriation was to provide for the extent of the credit given generally for the army, rather than for the particular sub-divisions of the army service in its separate heads. Although he admitted that the successful and undeniable defence was the necessity of the case, yet there were different ways in which the practice of extraordinaries had been recognized. During the first seven years after his administration commenced, there was no subject in that House which brought on more hostile debate than the finances; they were discussed on the side of those who first attacked his opinions, with great vigilance and perseverance. In the years 1786 and 1791 particularly, debates arose on the peace income and peace expenditure, and so far was parliament from shutting its eyes to the extraordinaries of the army, that in each of the committees of those times, there was to be found an estimate of their probable amount; they were calculated by one committee to amount to 260,000*l.* and by another, to 280,000*l.* arising out of the extraordinaries, and not provided for by parliament: nor had one word against the principle of those extraordinaries been ever stated in any one of the debates to which he alluded. Indeed the committee of 1782 did not propose to

abolish

abolish the principle of extraordinaries, but it recognized it, by proposing to limit it as well as it could. It recommended in the report, that the House should endeavour with as much accuracy as possible to have an estimate of probable extraordinaries, and to regulate the drafts of governors abroad, and particularly the bills of exchange, which, as he stated before, formed a great article of extraordinaries; it still, however, would be impossible to provide for every particular case. Ministers were only capable of checking these drafts and bills by a general regulation; and he would undertake to say, that during the present war, every practicable general regulation had been established to submit bills of exchange to as many checks as possible.

Mr. Grenville had formerly given instructions to the governors and commanders abroad to confine them under as strict examination as possible, but no estimate was given in by him of probable extraordinaries. The present administration, however, went further, they not only adopted the beneficial regulations of Mr. Grenville, but at much as possible complied with the substance of the other measure recommended by Colonel Barre: he had himself in the large votes of credit, stated the amount of probable extraordinaries. He confessed, that in making such estimates, every gentleman was liable to be mistaken in his calculations and expectations; nay, he was sorry to find, in a recent instance, that he had met in that respect with a considerable disappointment; from the nature of the thing, however, that must happen when men endeavoured to make provision before-hand for the extraordinaries to be incurred. He had heard it stated, as one of the articles of charge against him, that he had thought proper constantly to propose a vote of credit to a greater amount than had been hitherto voted by parliament; what was that but a compliance with the regulations proposed by Colonel Barre, to endeavour, as there was foreseen a necessity for extraordinaries to a large amount, to estimate this probable amount. He found it necessary to make one observation respecting the bills of exchange which he had before mentioned. Gentlemen must see that they were attended and guided entirely by the local regulations of the various places they were drawn at, and, therefore, that he was not able to estimate them with precision. Consequently the charge of not proposing full estimates, amounted only to the charge of having failed where no man in his senses could pretend to be accurate. One principle cause of inaccuracy arose from the high price of provisions; which proved two things; first, that the expences were necessarily higher than in any former war to the same extent; and,

secondly, that it was impossible to foresee the evil, so as to give a correct estimate to the public. The only thing then that remained, was to diminish the extraordinaries as far as could be done, by a moderate probable computation, and keep nothing wilfully back from the public. As a proof that he had done so, he appealed to the votes of credit which he had pushed to an extent unexampled in any other administration. He had endeavoured to provide for such parts of the expenditure as had been foreseen. The only way in which he could have prevented the probability of deficiency, would be, if the House had thought proper to grant a vote of credit so much beyond the amount of probable extraordinaries, as to take care that the provision must be beyond the services, and not to leave it possible for the service to exceed the provision. But what would be the wisdom and policy of such a measure? If he had gone to the outside of a probable estimate, there would be provided a dead fund, manifestly to the injury of the public; and even though that should be done, after all the estimates had been voted, and that the accounts were also kept to the day, all the estimates could not be paid. While he appealed to the practice of his predecessors, as a justification for incurring extraordinaries, he declared, he did not mean to deny that they had greatly exceeded their estimate; he allowed, that partly from a fluctuation in the prices of various articles, partly from the impossibility of foreseeing many expences which he afterwards found it necessary to incur, and partly, he was ready to allow, from the errors of his calculation, there were left above the estimate large and heavy extraordinaries, and he not only felt it himself as a disappointment, but it might also be stated as matter of disappointment to the House and to the public.

He next came to the comparison of the amount of extraordinaries unprovided for by parliament, as incurred in the present war and in the American war. The honourable gentleman had declared them to be greater than those of any other war that was ever known. Two reasons, the extent of the war abroad, and the dearth of provisions at home, he had given, why they should be so. Certainly the vote of credit must be deducted from the extraordinaries in the present war, because they were foreseen and provided for; that formed a great deduction. The taxes were also funded before-hand for the loan of exchequer bills. There was another sum to be deducted: in the calculation of the peace establishment by the committee, he had already mentioned that 280,000*l.* was the sum named as the probable extraordinaries; that sum, he contended, was foreseen also by parliament, and he had a right to deduct

deduct so much yearly during the war. If, therefore, subject to all those deductions, the extraordinaries were calculated fairly, they would amount to the sum of 4,600,000*l.* only during the present war; and as all the extraordinaries of the American war were wholly incurred without the previous consent of parliament, they might be stated to amount to 9,100,000*l.* exclusive of the votes of credit, for there were some votes of credit, though he did not reckon their amount. There was therefore a balance in favour of the present war, and against the American war, of 4,500,000*l.* incurred in extraordinaries. This was a statement which he had a right to make, when he was charged with incurring an enormous sum in extraordinaries beyond the example of all former wars, without the consent of parliament. Having taken leave of the extraordinaries of the army, he would make a few short comparisons in the other services. In the course of the present contest, it had been his practice to anticipate as much as possible all the services to their full amount. During the years of the American war, there were in navy and ordnance Bills, 12,000,000*l.* incurred without the authority of parliament; and not only incurred without the previous consent of parliament, but not made good at the end of each year; whereas the practice had been, in the present war, to anticipate as much of the expences as possible, or to make them good at the end of the year, and not to leave them as a total deficiency at the end of the war. The total amount of the deficiency of the navy and army, and of the unprovided of the ordnance, amounted in the three years of the present war to 16 or 17,000,000*l.* and in the American war, the deficiencies of these three services amounted to the enormous sum of 23,000,000*l.* and yet he heard it stated, that he had gone beyond all former times in the extraordinaries. He had, he said, shewn that he had endeavoured to prevent extraordinaries from being incurred, and had provided for those which had been possible to estimate; he had also stated, that the high price of provisions was one cause, among others, of his not being able to foresee all the extraordinaries; he did not therefore find it necessary to say more upon that part of the subject. He trusted that he had fully proved to the complete satisfaction of the House, that the extraordinaries could not have been defrayed by any other means than those to which it had been found necessary to have recourse. He viewed the army money in the light of a current fund; and it could not be controverted, that the demands of the current year were to be provided for in proportion as the sum for extraor-

dinaries came into the Exchequer, and therefore he conceived, that no deviation from the principle could be implied in any instance which the honourable gentleman had mentioned, further than the constant practice warranted.

He next came to consider the Act for the regulation of the pay-officers, the violation of which had been so vehemently urged: the spirit of that Act related to the issuing of Bills by the Paymaster-General, and which the honourable gentleman contended should be issued by the Bank of England; when the honourable gentleman talked of the information which he declared he had received from a person in office, he either could not have understood the nature of that information, or if he had, he did not reason on it in a just and conclusive manner. The fact was, that the warrant was strictly conformable to the letter and spirit of the act of parliament. The Bank was to keep open a cash account under the direction of the Paymaster General, and it was generally understood, that the Bank would never charge themselves with any thing but cash. In consequence of that idea, when the exchequer bills were issued by warrant, and came into the Bank, they sent one of their officers to acquaint the Paymaster, that they could not, according to their system, receive them as cash. The Bills were, therefore, disposed of by the Paymaster-General, not for the purposes of profit, but merely as a matter of necessity. Some time after, his right honourable friend near him (Mr. Steele) proposed to the Bank an arrangement, by which the Bank were to take the Bills as cash: to that arrangement the Bank had acceded. Such was the exact state of the transaction, on which so much censure had been lavished, and he should leave it to the candour of the House to decide, with what justice any blame could attach to a measure completely unforeseen and unavoidable. There had been in no point of view the slightest deviation from the meaning of the act, and the vigilance of the Paymaster was entitled to considerable praise.

He next came to another charge contained in the resolutions of the honourable gentleman, which went to criminate his Majesty's ministers for deviating from the letter of the act; but if he were to be condemned by the letter of the act, he was perfectly warranted in saying, that it could not, in the least, apply to him. There was not one word to be found in it, which directed that the payments should be made on a particular day, therefore any deviation from the strict letter could not be inferred (Mr. Grey here by a gesture expressed his dissent)—“The honourable gentleman, continued the Chancellor

of

of the Exchequer, seems to be shocked at the argument I have just used, and appears to think that the equity of the act should be alone considered. Thus when he finds he can no longer maintain his propositions on the letter of the act, which he now considers as a ground no longer tenable, he has recourse to the equity of it; and yet the honourable gentleman denies me the use of the spirit or the letter, just as it suits his own occasion." [A cry of *hear! hear!*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared, that he only made use of this mode of reasoning to shew the fallacy of the honourable gentleman's arguments; he did not however mean to press it, or take any advantage of the weakness of them, he should therefore direct his observations to an occurrence of a more material nature. The act of parliament certainly directed the Paymaster-General to form his memorials in the names of the persons who were interested in them, and in answer to the charge of the day of payment being omitted, as specified by the act, he should only remark, that the Paymaster had no knowledge of the persons interested; it was consequently evident, that the memorials could not have been made out exactly against the day of payment, as the names of the parties were not ascertained. He would therefore submit to the judgment of the House, whether the Paymaster was not under such strong and positive circumstances, at least excuseable with respect to the spirit of the act.

The honourable gentleman had in the next place proceeded to another objection, that when the memorials were presented for payment, the Treasury had not, according to the direction of the statute, complied with the demands of the parties interested. To that, he trusted, he could give an answer, which even to the honourable gentleman himself would appear satisfactory. He grounded it on the plea of necessity: for at the time when the memorials were presented for payment, there was no money in the Treasury. Perhaps however the honourable gentleman would not be satisfied with that answer, which might impress conviction on the most stubborn mind; and ask, why the Treasury had not provided the proper sums of money to answer demands which they knew were to be made on them? He should answer that question, by pleading the statements which he had formerly made on the same subject, and he should take the liberty of adverting to them once more: The extraordinaries were, it could not be denied, of such a nature, that it could not be foreseen to what sum they might exactly amount; if they consequently exceeded any sum at which they had been previously calculated, they could not be

be otherwise provided for, than by taking from the establishment those sums which were necessary for defraying them. He declared he felt himself justified in stating these considerations even in a stronger manner, as the extraordinaries were not only unforeseen, but the precise time of their payment could not be ascertained; it was absolutely necessary, however, that they should be discharged precisely on the day when the bills of exchange drawn for that purpose became due. How then was it possible to make that punctual provision, the want of which had been so much censured, for sums which could not be previously ascertained, and at a time which could not be exactly foreseen, without taking from the establishment, or the money voted on estimate, those sums which it became indispensably requisite to apply to that purpose? The subsistence money had been regularly issued on the 24th of each month; the half-pay had been attended to, as well as all articles of a compassionate sort, and every claim which related to arrears in general. Whether the deficiency which took place in the establishment, occasioned by the necessity of providing for extraordinaries, should have fallen on the half-pay, Chelsea, or the staff, was the question which appeared peculiarly entitled to consideration. It seemed but fair and just that if any class of men were compelled to suffer any temporary inconvenience, from the unavoidable excess of extraordinaries, and which of course diminished the sums voted on estimate for the year, it should be that class which were from their peculiar situation best able to support it. Nor could there be any doubt in considering the situation of the officer on half-pay, Chelsea hospital, and the staff-officers, which ought to be paid, and from which payment ought in such a case to be withheld. It could not be supposed, that officers on the staff were in the same want of those sums which were absolutely necessary to the maintenance of the other classes. When therefore the money voted for the service of the staff was withheld, it was done upon the fairest and most equitable principles, and could not be productive of any essential distress.

The honourable gentleman had, however, contended, that an equal division was not made for all the branches of service, and had asked, why were they not all paid alike? Was it not sufficient to say, that it was impossible to provide for extraordinaries which could not be foreseen, and the amount of which it was impossible to ascertain? He would go farther, and state, that it was impossible to ascertain or meet the public expences, by ways and means, however large, it being out of the power and judgment of the House to form

an exact opinion of what their amount might be. It could not be justly said, what the state of the consolidated fund would be, what sums the bank of England might agree to advance for the exigencies of the public, or what the loan would produce. If, therefore, all the important points could not be known to the House, as well as the exact time at which they were to operate, was it any reproach to the treasury, that they were not able to foresee impossibilities, or ascertain ways and means which, in their nature, were unascertainable? It should also be considered, that the extraordinaries were indispensable branches of the public service, which could not be carried on without the most rigid punctuality in the payment of them.

In the course of his speech, the honourable gentleman had touched on one head, though he had not thought proper to ground any charge on it. He should therefore say a few words on the subject of that head, which related to the application of the vote of credit to past services, and which the honourable gentleman considered as a proceeding for which his majesty's ministers exposed themselves to blame. In direct opposition to the honourable gentleman, he would maintain, that the application of the vote of credit to past services, was not only proper but just and necessary. Did the honourable gentleman mean to say, that the army money was not to be used for extraordinaries, and did he propose to establish it as a true proposition, that the exchequer bills were to be disposed of, and paid at a great loss, for the purpose of coming within the act of parliament? If that was his meaning, by such a system, the publick would suffer in a most material way, for government could not, according to that statement, dispose of money then in their hands, for the payment of extraordinaries, while, to the vast prejudice of the public interest, they would be obliged to part with exchequer bills at a considerable loss, and that to answer the very purpose for which they had already in their possession sufficient sums of money. Did the honourable gentleman call that measure economy? and was that conduct a part of his plan for the public retrenchment?

He next came to the charge of falsehood in the disposition paper of the public money, which the honourable gentleman had so strongly urged. There had never been, he maintained from the accession to the present moment, any disposition paper laid on the table of the House, which was not equally liable to the same charge as that brought forward by the honourable gentleman against the present disposition paper, of deceiving parliament. In all that period the same kind of paper had been laid before the House of Commons, without any variation.

Gentlemen

Gentlemen would, therefore, judge with what justice, with what consistency the honourable gentleman could make a charge against ministers of wishing to deceive parliament; a charge which was merely grounded on the production of a paper which had, from the accession to the present moment, been furnished precisely in the same manner and form. The paper had been signed during the present reign by Mr. Speer, the clerk of the revenue, a gentleman of great respectability, and was laid on the table of the House as a matter of course; and so little did he conceive it to be an object of any consequence, that he had not at any time mentioned a word on the subject matter of it to the gentleman whose office it was to sign it. If, therefore, the honourable gentleman considered the paper as guilty of falsehood, he trusted that the honourable gentleman's candour would acquit him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) of any share in that weighty charge. But the paper, unfortunately for the honourable gentleman, happened to form a principal foundation of his charges. It appeared to involve a subject of great and mighty concern; it had, no doubt, been read by some of the most attentive members in the House; it was equally true, however, that it had been read by some of the most inattentive; and he was persuaded he could prove, that the honourable gentleman had not, with all that attention for which he was distinguished in financial considerations, read it himself. The honourable gentleman had set out with declaring that the statements contained in the paper were fallacious, and calculated to mislead the judgment of parliament; but it so happened that there was not one word respecting any particular statement to be found in any part of it. That such was the case he would undertake to prove, even to the satisfaction of the honourable gentleman himself, who would therefore be obliged to abandon one of his chief, but ill-chosen grounds of attack. The title of the disposition paper was in itself a refutation of what had been urged on the strength of it. It was an account of the sums of money expended for the public services in the year 1795, to March 1796, and was disposed under the several heads. It was liable to be taken in two senses: the first was, with regard to the *items* respectively applied, and so the honourable gentleman took it. But there was also another interpretation to which it was subject, and the honourable gentleman would find that it contained a distinct statement of the various heads of service which usually occurred in public accounts, such as navy, ordnance, land forces, &c. &c. It was unquestionably true, that it took notice of every *item* of expence and drew a total of the whole under the column of

sums
 Vol IV 1796
 18
 Now the way to apply this book is to look for the sums

sums granted, and then gave separately the sums granted and the sums paid. The honourable gentleman had not however, with his usual acuteness, observed that he had only mentioned the *items* in general terms, for, unhappily for that very material part of his charge on which he so much relied, instead of any sums being stated or annexed to the *items*, there were only to be found opposite to them perfect blanks. Such then was the ground on which the honourable gentleman had thought proper to bring part of his charge, and such was the history of that paper, which had afforded such ill-founded comments; which had then been made out and laid on the table as a matter of course, and respecting which the unvaried regulation had been followed for near a century. But if even the honourable gentleman had been as successful as his wishes led him to think he would have been, in establishing the falsehood of the paper, it certainly would not have followed that he (Mr. Pitt) was implicated in guilt.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded by observing, that though he might not have much to expect from the candour of the honourable gentleman, he had every reliance on the candour and conviction of the House.

Mr. Fox said, he knew not what character the minister would allow him for candour, but he was under the necessity of speaking upon the question before the House, and he should speak as he felt, as was his custom. He had listened as attentively as he could to a very able speech delivered by the right honourable gentleman. What struck him first, upon reviewing that speech was, that the minister had made great exertions where there was the least occasion for exertion, in point of real argument. Where his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) had dwelt the least, and touched on points as being merely incidental, there the minister had been the most elaborate in his answer. Where his honourable friend had been the most forcible, there the minister had been the least explicit. The truth of this matter was, the right honourable gentleman had said much on points which required but little, and very little on those which required a good deal. The right honourable gentleman, however, had been very methodical, and he should endeavour to follow him in the order he had adopted. The part on which the right honourable gentleman was the most successful, was, that which went simply to state, that the whole which had been done by administration, against the letter of the law, was the result of necessity. On this he had justified the whole of his extraordinaries, on the extent of which his honourable friend had spoken so ably this day. Now, if any

gentleman had heard the speech of the minister that night, without hearing that of his honourable friend, that was to say, whoever had heard the defence, without hearing the accusation, would have thought that the accusation was merely the incurring of any extraordinaries at all, not that they had been incurred improvidently, or that they had been withheld improperly from the House, or that when incurred or provided for, the money voted for them had not been applied to their discharge. On army extraordinaries he would first say, in a general way, that, to a certain degree, they were evils unavoidable. He said this without diffidence, because extraordinaries had been recognized by the House of Commons, precisely under the description which he was then giving of them. The minister himself had in his speech of that day admitted extraordinaries to be an evil, but had contended that they were necessary. This was the answer which he gave to that part of the charge, although by what he had said, he had admitted them to be, to a certain degree, contrary to the principles of our constitution. He must therefore contend, that these practices, which partook of an unconstitutional nature, ought to be avoided as much as possible in our executive government in its future arrangements. The right honourable gentleman maintained, that if the expences of the year exceeded what the executive government had foreseen, and that in matters which required immediate payment, we must pay that service which has that necessary demand upon us; and when that necessity demands it, we must so far obey the act of appropriation. Undoubtedly this would always appear to be true, if it was to be argued generally, as the minister was pleased to argue it now: and this sort of argument would be applicable to any other law, as well as the appropriation act, inevitable necessity being an answer to every thing. This, certainly, taken in its full extent, would apply to any act of parliament, as well as the appropriation act. It would, in short, apply to every thing as a general rule, and only be subject to some particular exceptions, as most general rules are.

The right honourable gentleman had alluded to the case which was debated in the year 1743 or 1744, where the House of Commons had inquired into the disposition of 40,000*l.* and how far that was, or was not, a deviation from the duty of the executive government to make the appropriation which they did of that money; whether there was ground for censuring administration? and that upon that question the House of Commons had determined, that this conduct of executive government was deserving of praise instead

stead of censure. No doubt of the regularity of that determination of the House of Commons, nay, he would go farther, and say, that had he been a member of that House at that time, he believed he should have voted in the majority upon that occasion. What principle did the agitation of that question inculcate? It shewed to us this, that 145 members of the House of Commons of that day, thought that the slightest deviation from the letter of the appropriation act deserved to be censured; and here he could not help observing, that the minister seemed to think that he was speaking *ad hominem* to him, when he told him that person for whose memory he had, as he ought to have, great esteem and gratitude (his father), voted in the majority. To which he could only answer, that he believed the right honourable gentleman would find on examination, that another person equally entitled to the esteem and gratitude of that right honourable gentleman (the late earl of Chatham), voted in the minority in the same division, and therefore thought that it was proper to censure ministers for applying this money, even on that occasion, contrary to the provisions of the appropriation act. But what was the accusation here? not that the payment of a particular Bill drawn should not be made, when that became necessary for the service; that his honourable friend was incapable of making, or if he did, Mr. Fox said, he was sure he would resist it; but that the extraordinaries had for a long time been studiously concealed from the House, when the ministers ought to have stated them, because they knew them. It had been stated, that by a book, which he admired as much as any one did, and also by the report of a committee of that House in 1782, the extraordinaries of the American war were censured. They certainly were so. The right honourable gentleman had stated that the extraordinaries were very great in that war, and that administration could not now be blamed for these extraordinaries, any more than they were at that time. Upon this, he must observe, that the case was widely different between the condition of that administration and the present. However desirable it might be to put an end to extraordinaries at that moment, it was absolutely impossible. Was the case the same with the right honourable gentleman? Indignant as he professed to be at the amount of these extraordinaries, and violent as he was at the administration which had carried them to such an extent; coming into power upon these principles, and presiding in the government of country during seven years of peace, one would have naturally expected that in this particular at least, there would have been

some radical reform; instead of which the present minister lays before parliament accounts of extraordinary expences which far exceed any that were ever incurred by his predecessors. The right honourable gentleman had talked of our extraordinaries being no more than 4,000,000*l.* in three years. The fact was, they exceeded that amount in this very year; and upon this part of the subject the right honourable gentleman had made for himself deductions which he did not allow in his calculations to lord North. Mr. Fox stated the sums, to illustrate his observation.

He next proceeded to observe that the minister had that day defended himself by referring to the American war, the practice of which they had all reprobated, and the right honourable gentleman most of any; this was a little singular, but however, so it was, and the House would do well to observe it. The right honourable gentleman had taken up considerable time upon this, and he was sorry he had imitated him in that respect, for the point was too clear to require much argument. The great matter to be explained was, how did it happen that when the House had voted sums for extraordinaries, that these sums were not applied to the purposes for which the House thought they were intended? That the services were not paid for as provided? He wished to know why they were delayed after they were provided for? He wished to know in particular why the payment of the clothing of the army had been so long delayed, and that contrary to the express direction of the act of parliament passed for that purpose? Why! the honourable gentleman would say, because money allowed for that purpose was applied necessarily to other services. Surely, however, that complaint should not have existed an hour after the vote of the next, which included all these allowances, and made up all these deficiencies: How did the minister answer this? By acknowledging a system which tended to bring our finances into a state of greater confusion than any man in this country ever thought of before. The system of the right honourable gentleman was, that new votes for old demands should, at the discretion of the executive government, be applied to the discharge of still newer demands, so that to the uncertainty of the application of money voted by parliament, there was to be no end. How was it possible to come to any clearness in practice upon such a system? What excuse could there be made for such confusion? Why not apply money in general to the purpose for which it was specifically voted? The extraordinaries were generally voted early in the session. At least he was entitled to ask, why

why we did not pay off arrears of former years, for which sums had been specifically voted?

To put this point in another way, the minister should hereafter candidly declare, that although he called on parliament to vote a sum of money for a particularly described purpose, that he nevertheless meant to apply it to another. He heartily wished that there might come a system by which they should understand directly what it was they were doing. That, if necessary, the House might vote so much occasionally for the deficiency of supply of each preceding year under that head specifically. Although this would appear extraordinary, he could not help thinking it would be a considerable improvement in the mode of transacting the business of the public. They would then annually see how much the preceding year was deficient, and clearness was essential in the transacting of business. That, therefore, instead of voting any extraordinary, there should be voted sums to satisfy all demands for services, the payments of which had not been fulfilled on account (to make use of a favourite expression of the minister) of the diversion of former services. It would be better to do so at once, for that in substance, although not in letter, they had been a long time doing. That would not be a more substantial disobedience to the law than the present practice, and it would be accompanied by the advantage of being more intelligible to the public.

On what principle was it, that instead of settling our arrears, they left those arrears standing on account of the necessity of settling new demands? Let them see to what this practice would lead. The minister said that new demands were often more urgent than arrears. Granted. The vote of credit was exhausted. These new demands might be stated to the House, and then they should provide for them as they occurred, instead of postponing the payment of arrears, instead of distressing those who accused them of that shameful and scandalous mode of conduct. These arrears fell heavy on the persons to whom they were due first; afterwards on the executive government, and finally heavy on the mass of the people, who must bear the whole of their load eventually. If some regulation be not adopted upon this, where were they to end? The minister said, that these were extraordinary services for which it was necessary to appropriate money in preference to other services of last year. If the fact were so, he must observe, that, unless some regulation be made of this, new services would follow one another, so that the House of Commons,

mons, or the people, could never know that the money was applied to the purposes for which the law required it to be applied. Besides the perpetual confusion which such arrangements must produce in our accounts, how is parliament to know where this system may end? We may go on perpetually contracting debt, and perpetually voting extraordinaries for past deficiencies, but which are applied to new demands, leaving always the arrears unpaid.

Having said so much upon the violation of the appropriation act, he came next to the consideration of the paymasters' act; he contended it had also been most positively and unnecessarily broken. If the Bank would not receive the exchequer bills, which it was admitted they had a right to reject, why did not government issue money in another way for the purpose for which these bills were issued? They afterwards, it seems, came to some arrangement with the Bank; but supposing that this arrangement had never taken place, to what situation would they have been reduced? Had the Bank, or had it not a right to refuse these Bills? They certainly had. They did refuse them for some time, the consequence of which was a breach of the act of parliament. And if this arrangement had never taken place, they would have been precisely in the situation of doing for a longer time, what they actually did for a short time, and then the inconvenience to the public would have been prodigious.

He then came to the disposition paper, on which the right honourable gentleman admitted there was much explanation to be made. He was right in admitting that, there certainly was much to be explained. He had listened, however, very attentively to what the minister called an explanation of that subject, and he must confess that he did not hear any thing that appeared to him to excuse or palliate the minister's conduct upon the subject; of what was in itself a breach of a positive law without a just cause for it. It was said, that it had been the constant practice of the House to violate the appropriation act. That a committee had reported its disapprobation of the breach of that act, but that as parliament had never done any thing against the mode of appropriating money to the discharge of the extraordinaries from time to time, they seemed by that silence to admit there was no possibility of preventing the abuse. He would not then question the validity of that reasoning. He owned, however, it appeared to him to be at least doubtful. It seemed to him to be a little hasty, to say that parliament has made no law against this practice with regard

regard to extraordinaries, and that therefore they did not disapprove of the practice. But when parliament had declared, as decidedly they had done, that it was contrary to the principles of the constitution, they must be supposed at least to think that the existing laws were sufficient, if properly enforced, to remedy the evil. But, said the right honourable gentleman, parliament, by making no provision to prevent these extraordinaries encroaching on the appropriation act, shewed they connived at it. He would grant the minister the whole force of this argument. If parliament were of this sentiment, the more force there must be in the acts which they had really passed, and which were declaratory of their sentiments on this subject, because those who connive at some abuses must surely be well convinced of others before they prohibit them. Thus by relying on what they had not done, the right honourable gentleman had given double weight to what they had done in the way of prohibition. What had they said on the cloathing of the army? When parliament despaired, if the minister pleased, of adopting any general regulation against extraordinaries, they declared certain things must be done, and ordered a strict and liberal observance with regard to the cloathing of the army. For this purpose they directed the paymaster to make certain memorials at certain times; that he should draw such and such Bills, and that payments should be made on certain stated times. The minister stated upon this point (to shew he could state something on that subject) that this was not a charge on the treasury, nor on him in his official situation. To this he would observe that his hon. friend (Mr. Grey) did not complain of him particularly, but of ministers generally, upon this subject, and therefore there was nothing in the distinction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, upon that point. Here, however, he must complain against the ministers who every day acted contrary to law, and that not a law made at a time when the subject of it was not well understood. The minister said, that this was an act with which it was impossible to comply; that it required a memorial to be presented when that is impossible. Be it so. That it required the payment of money when it was not in the possession of executive government. Be it so. But it was an act of parliament framed when the right honourable gentleman was himself a member of that House, and active in the passing of the act, (although that was not material.) But this was not an old act of parliament, formed when the business of the executive government was not understood, as it is by his majesty's ministers. It was a modern act of parliament

ment to prevent those very abuses which he contended not to be within the spirit of the appropriation act. When the minister considered the supply of the year, ought he not to take care he had considered the law of the country? Ought he not to observe the positive injunctions of an act of parliament which he himself took a share in framing? Or was this all? What were they to say of an act of parliament that was made so as to be impossible to be obeyed, or its provisions complied with? Did the minister say that the provisions of this act were difficult in times of war? That it was an act of parliament, in which it was impossible to proceed at all times? Did the minister come to the House, and complain of an act of his own making? Did he complain that it was wholly impracticable in time of war? That it was the time for which it was principally made? What reason had the minister to complain of this instead of complying with it? In the years 1794 and 1795, he did not comply with it. He seemed to leave the act as a monument of the inefficacy of parliament; a monument of the motives of a man which are only that of intending to gain a little popularity; for which he seems to favour a popular act, but with which, after it is passed, he does not mean to comply, nor does comply when afterwards he comes into office. The character of men in that House had from many events been questioned and suspected from time to time for the last forty years; and he was sorry to say that many things were done, that had a very unfavourable effect on many characters in the course of that time. He would not say, although he felt much, what might be thought upon that subject in consequence of what had happened within the last two years. These things should be recollected by that House. They concerned the members of it nearly. The more especially when certain doctrines which he had lately heard were to be maintained by the minister of executive government. Much had been thrown out (he was not now enquiring whether right or wrong) against the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and it was said in his time that man professed what he did not mean to practice. That charge, he feared, was much more just now than it was then. Men had some time ago so reprobated the conduct of others, that they had gone so far as to say it was impossible to make part of an administration with them. What did they do now? Only say to the people we will bring in acts of parliament to amuse the public in which things that are theoretically right are maintained; but when the authors of them have gained a little popularity, they disobey the provisions of such acts, and make speeches on the impracticability

impracticability of them. He knew not what influence there might be in that House, this however, he knew, that it was impossible for that House to have the confidence of the public, if they did not take care that ministers obeyed acts of parliament, instead of talking of the impracticability of them, when called upon to obey them. The minister, to do him justice, had said a great deal of explanation was due to this subject. The misfortune was, that he did not give that explanation. By the explanation which he gave, the act of parliament, to which he had at last alluded, would be null and void; because it never could be told when the right honourable gentleman would be able to calculate exactly what would be the expence of the year, and till that time he had assumed a dispensing power with regard to the provisions of the law. He agreed with the minister, that to over calculate the expence of the year would be disadvantageous to the public. He agreed too that the very best system was to make the estimate as great and the extraordinaries as little as possible. Upon that point he had often complained before, and he complained then, that the ministers had not done his utmost. An evident instance in the case of the barracks presented itself; the minister himself had said that it would have been more regular to have given to the House of Commons an account of them in the first instance; and yet these ministers who pleaded guilty in the instance of barracks, told the House that in every other instance they had done better than their predecessors.

Having said this, he must observe upon the general out-line of the subject before the House, that in his opinion a vote of credit was better than extraordinaries; first, because you provide in the former for the interest of the debt you incur; secondly, you do not, by a vote of credit, disobey a positive act of parliament, in complying with such vote. He must again desire to know, whether extraordinaries might not be voted immediately after they were incurred when parliament were sitting? What advantages were there to be expected in a financial point of view, to say nothing of the principle, if extraordinaries incurred this day were to be voted immediately by the House? How stood the case, when compared with the cloathing of the army, which was required by law? He wished to know why he did not provide for them at once, if necessary, by a vote of credit. The minister said his votes of credit bore a greater proportion to the expence than in former wars, and yet he would defray expences of this year out of money voted in the last. He would ask why the vote of credit ought not to be increased, rather than that the service of last year

should be unpaid? The right honourable gentleman had stated a number of suppositions. He said, he could not know the extent of the estimates of the service altogether, or the time they would each of them occur. Certainly. He said also, he could not estimate when our supplies will come in: the most certain in that respect were, the land and malt; another was the case of the exchequer bills; and most of all, was the period when the loan was to be paid.—Granted. But, what occasion had they to suppose when they were talking of facts? One loan came in so early last year, that it was argued that a possible inconvenience might arise from the circumstance; that the loan might come in before they had use for it; and that it would be lying dead upon our hands, while they were paying the interest first. At this very period ministers were proceeding in direct disobedience to the act of parliament, and they were scandalously in arrear to the army. Then, he would say again, he had no occasion to have recourse to supposition while he was furnished with facts upon the subject.

With respect to this year, 9,000,000*l.* had already been expended in the army. He would leave the House to judge what they were likely to do next year. As to the question, What was the blame of the executive government? he would say there was much indeed in under all the circumstances in the disobedience of the law, in their proceeding without informing the House of what they were doing, and what was the situation of the country. Of allowing the House to take steps to prevent future disobedience, which, after all the notice which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had from the year 1783 and 1784, and the part he himself took in the proceedings of that time, appeared to him to be intolerable, to be highly criminal; but all this, great as it was, still appeared to be comparatively little, when placed by the side of the disobedience of the paymaster's act: without coming to the House for an indemnity, year after year, ministers disobeyed the act, and that on principles which made the whole of the act a mere piece of waste paper, except when they came to calculate the extent of our expences: Had he any difficulty in saying that this was a great misdemeanor in administration, and that which called for the public judgment? Most certainly he had not. It seemed, however, that the right honourable gentleman thought of securing himself by precedent. The right honourable gentleman had heard of the case of the Earl of Macclesfield, who, in many respects was a worthy character. How stood the case upon the trial of that nobleman? What was said by the wisest men of that day upon that occasion? that precedent of similar conduct

duct in others ought not to prevent the pronounciation of judgment upon guilt. He would therefore say, that although precedent might be pleaded to prevent a rigorous judgment, yet it was no justification of the breach of the law. On the paymaster's act, therefore, he would say no excuse could be offered, for there was no precedent for its breach. It was an act of parliament recently made on a full consideration of the subject. An act which all men were bound to obey, and the minister more than any other, on account of the share he took in framing of it.

The minister had, however, wilfully, wittingly, wantonly, and unnecessarily disobeyed it; and he could not help saying, that administration, by such conduct, had made the act a sheet of waste paper; he defied any man to shew what the act was good for, if the minister's defence was just. The minister said it was inapplicable to a time of peace. This should have been stated to the House long ago, if that was really the feeling which the minister had upon the subject. He would again repeat, and he was sorry to be obliged to repeat, that ministers had knowingly, wittingly, wilfully, and according to their own statement, unnecessarily, set this act aside, and made it a sheet of waste paper.

Heartily agreeing with his honourable friend, in all the facts he stated, Mr. Fox said, he should most cordially vote for the motion before the House.

Mr. Steele said, he was not inclined to follow the right honourable gentleman who sat down through his variety of argument; he rose merely to say a few words respecting the pay-office, in which he was so interested and connected. His right honourable friend, (Mr. Pitt) had indeed saved him even the trouble of explanation to any length, and hence he should confine himself to a point or two. The right honourable gentleman had contended that the pay-office act was rendered nugatory and waste paper; this, he could declare from his own experience, was not the case; many and beneficial consequences were owing to it, so many and so notorious, that it was needless for him to dwell upon them.

With regard to his not complying with the provisions of the act respecting the cloathing of the military, it was impossible. The payments were to be made half-yearly to the colonels of the regiments for the off-reckonings; and hence it was impossible to comply directly with the act. The right honourable gentleman said, when ministers could not put the provisions of the act in practice, that it behoved them to come and ask its repeal. Whether or not they were highly culpable for not
having

having done so, he left the House to judge. But if they could not do as the act directed, he was aware that parliament would not come to a resolution to condemn them for violating a law which it was out of their power to observe.

With regard to the off-reckonings, a variety of papers were requisite for officers abroad, which could not be at hand when the payments were obliged to be made. As to the exchequer bills, it was true that the bank had refused receiving them, and hence 83,000*l.* were obliged to be issued in December, 1793, and put into the hands of the cashier of the pay-office. There were however arrangements made to prevent any such inconvenience in future. Mr. Steele concluded with moving the previous question.

Mr. Fox explained.

Mr. Sheridan observed, the right honourable gentleman seemed to insinuate that he had assumed great merit for the motion which he brought forward in April, 1784, he hoped from his manner, that it was not his intention to oppose the sentiments which it contained, and therefore desired that it should be read from the Journals by the clerk. The motion was to the following effect:—"That it is the opinion of the committee, that if any person in his majesty's treasury shall misapply any of the public money, contrary to the act of appropriation, or to sinister purposes during a dissolution of parliament, the said person or persons shall be adjudged guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor." This was the resolution to which the right honourable gentleman had adverted in his speech, which contained doctrines which he hoped he did not now disavow, he recollected he had the honour of his support at the time it was proposed, on the ground of its containing sentiments, which he could not controvert; he hoped now that it was not his intention to retract his former support of that motion, if he did, he conceived that it would be much more alarming than any thing contained in his speech.

The House then divided, and Mr. Grey's resolutions were negatived by the previous question.

<i>Ayes,</i> (For the previous question,)	209
<i>Noes,</i>	38

<i>Majority</i>	171
Adjourned.	

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, May 3.

There were ten orders of the day, which were all disposed of.

Sir

Sir Philip Stephens brought up the report of the Longitude Bill, which being agreed to, the Bill was ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. Rose brought in a Bill to enforce the act of last session, for raising a certain number of persons from the several counties of England for the service of his majesty's navy, which was read a first time.

Mr. Hobart brought up the report of the committee of supply, and ways and means, which were read and agreed to, and Bills ordered to be brought in in pursuance of the latter.

The Bills for more effectually preventing the landing of goods, wares, or merchandises, without the presence of a proper officer, &c. was read a third time and passed.

The Lottery Bill, Bill for appropriating a certain sum for the reduction of the national debt, and the Bill for exempting windows of dairies from the window light duty, passed committees.

The Bill for funding the navy debt was read a second time.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, May 9.

The Bills on the table were read in their different stages.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, May 9.

The Leadenhall-street, and Gravel-lane East-India warehouses Bills were reported. Ordered to be engrossed.

The Bedford Road, Bickner's Naturalization, and Lenton and Radford Inclosure Bills, were read a third time and passed.

Lord Sheffield presented a petition from the inhabitants of Lewes, in favour of the dog tax, with an exception for the purpose of exempting cottagers from the operation of the tax. Ordered to lie on the table.

SUPPLY.

The House resolved into a committee of supply, *Mr. Hobart* in the chair.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved as a resolution, That a sum not exceeding 500,000*l.* be granted for discharging the navy debt.

The

The Secretary at War moved "That a sum not exceeding 1,300,000*l.* be granted for the army extraordinaries for the year 1796.

That the sum of 438,035*l.* be granted for the payment of foreign troops raised, or to be raised, for the year 1796.

Mr. *Sheridan* said he should object, in the most positive terms, to this country's continuing to employ a set of men, who, it was apparent, were men that could not in any manner, or in any place, be depended on, and who it was impossible, without betraying the interests of this country, to send either on an expedition to the West Indies, or any other place where troops might be necessary. He did not perfectly understand what might be the destiny of the troops that were to be the object of this expence, nor how many regiments of them at present existed, neither did he know where they were at present, they were points of no great consequence; this he knew, that the employment of emigrants against their countrymen, had been attended with fatal consequences to this country, and had been productive only of that expence and disgrace which he was well assured the continuance of such an absurd system would but tend to increase and aggravate.

General Tarleton wished to know what regiments had been raised, and the present state of them. He only knew of a corps of French gentlemen, who served at a very moderate pay; he did not think there were, at this time, any regiments of emigrants.

The Secretary at War said, the House should take into consideration the state of those unfortunate men, who had been forced to leave their country, many of them had been long in service, and were men of considerable rank; they were now employed upon the same terms on which the emigrants served in the regiments of La Chatres, Monteny, and Castres; they were stationed at Jersey and Guernsey, and they performed such duty as might be required of them. Humanity dictated to us to provide for men in their situation, and it was providing for them in a way the least likely to wound their feelings; it was besides beneficial to the service of the country to employ them in a military capacity.

Mr. *Grey* declared, that he had no objection to extend the relief to any set of men whose situation appealed to the benevolence of the House. The emigrants certainly had that claim, and he should be glad to see every relief granted to them they might be in want of, but he did not see the necessity of providing for them as an army, after the experience we before had of the little dependence there was to be placed on their exertions,

exertions, particularly in the Quiberon affair. He thought it the duty of every member of that House to give it a decided negative.

The Secretary at War said, he could not conceive upon what grounds gentlemen should suppose that the French corps to be employed would betray the cause in which they are engaged, or act contrary to their professions. The failure of the Quiberon expedition was resorted to, but it was not to be inferred that the failure of that expedition was owing either to the mismanagement at home, or want of courage and energy in the French emigrants abroad: it was owing to one of those unforeseen circumstances that are likely to happen in every civil war, and it did not follow because there were some treacherous men who were employed in that expedition, that we should therefore cease to employ an emigrant, whose detestation of his countrymen's conduct, would operate to prevent his following their example.

General Tarleton said, it was matter of extreme surprise to him, that the honourable gentleman should withhold the information respecting the Quiberon expedition from the House, which would enable it to judge with accuracy, upon what was, or was not, the real cause of its failure. The honourable gentleman, when first applied to for that purpose, did not himself make any solid objection to the production of whatever might be necessary for the information of the House, but an appeal to the higher power, had furnished the honourable gentleman with plenty of reasons why such information should not be granted. If the papers which had been moved for respecting the business had been brought forward, the honourable gentleman, he had little doubt, would find there was that in them, which would be more than sufficient to subject him not only to the censure, but the punishment of the House of Commons.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to object to any discussion on the subject at this time. He could convince the House, by the most unanswerable arguments, of the impropriety and impolicy of producing the papers alluded to. If any gentleman thought proper to make a motion on that subject, he had no doubt of carrying conviction to the minds of the House in general, of the impolicy of acceding to such a request. He had not the smallest objection to go into a discussion of the business, if the papers already produced were thought to contain sufficient grounds to arraign the conduct of ministers, and would appoint a day for such discussion.

Mr. Sheridan said in reply to what had fallen from the honourable

honourable Secretary at War, concerning the failure of the Quiberon expedition, being classed among the unforeseen calamities of civil war, that if ministers would employ men who are unworthy of trust and confidence, and who have proved themselves so on every occasion where they have been trusted, what can be expected but defeat, disgrace, and ruin. He had always thought the Quiberon business, and should ever think it, one of the most mismanaged, most inhumanly mismanaged expeditions, that ever disgraced the annals of this or any other country.

The resolution was agreed to.

The next resolution proposed was for granting the sum of 290,000*l.* towards the expence of building barracks.

Mr. Grey said, he would not repeat the arguments against the establishment of them, but as he conceived it to be a dangerous innovation on the constitution, he would give it his negative.

Mr. Harrison wished to know if the money was to be expended in erecting any new barracks.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, no new ones would be built unless they were wanted. Another resolution was for granting 1500*l.* for the assistance of the Veterinary College.

A motion was made, that there be laid before the House an account of the general franks up to the 6th of April, 1796; which being presented by the proper person from the post-office, the same was ordered to lie on the table.

SUCCESSION TO REAL ESTATES.

On the question being put, that the report of the committee on the Bill for taxing the collateral succession to real estates be now reconsidered,

Mr. Crewe moved, that in place of the word "now," the words, "this day three months be substituted.

Lord George Cavendish seconded the motion. He said that this tax appeared liable to two principal objections. The insecurity which it would give to landed property, and the production of deeds, which, from the power vested in the commissioners of the revenue it would occasion. It would tend to depreciate landed property. It tended to equalize all property, and would operate as a confiscation of all the great landed estates in the country, for the use of the government. Considering this as its effect, he was called upon to resist it, if the levelling principle was carried into action, he cared but little whether it was introduced by the high hand of power, or

came

came from the quarter which some most apprehended. As the Bill had been but lately printed, and had only been one day in the hands of gentlemen, and as the principle of the measure was so new and important, he thought time should be given to consider it maturely, and that some delay should take place.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed his surprize that the noble lord should have adopted such a mode of reasoning upon the principle of the Bill; he did not see how it could possibly have the effect of giving insecurity to all landed property, or confiscating all considerable property, since it was evident that the tax itself did not bear any proportion to the property taxed, so as to justify such a violent conclusion. It was a tax that never could diminish the capital in any material degree. It never could be paid with reluctance, because the persons by whom it would be paid, would stand in that degree of relationship to the devisee, or intestate, which would induce them to consider their acquisition of the property, either by devise or descent, as a remote, or unexpected event, and they would, of course, feel little or no hardship in paying the tax out of that property which, perhaps, they did not think they had a right to, at least did not expect to enjoy. How was it possible for this tax to swallow up the capital? In how many years could it produce such an effect? There must be a quick succession of collateral descents to produce any thing like it, and it was not probable that collateral descent would occur successively, without the intervention of lineal descents. It had been said, that this tax would have an operation of a disagreeable nature to the public, by compelling them to the production of their title deeds, and a consequent exposition of their tenures, and the incumbrances that their estates might be subjected to; this, was not a fair argument, and neither justifiable upon the principles of the Bill, nor as matter of fact. The fact was, the Bill in no instance went to compel the disclosure of any such circumstances. The noble lord who seconded the motion had said, it was necessary that at least the House should have more time to consider of a subject so important. The noble lord could not be ignorant of the Bill's having been committed, reported, printed, and in the hands of every member several weeks since; and surely that was sufficient time to have taken its merits or demerits into consideration.

Lord G. Cavendish rose to explain.

Mr. Alderman Newnham said it was a Bill that must tend to the injury of the country; it would prevent men from ac-

quiring landed property, as they would be conscious that they could not transmit it to a collateral relation, without its value being diminished by such a tax. It was a system that would deprive the country of its wealth and inhabitants, as men would of course purchase land in other countries where no such restraint in the disposition of it existed. The alderman said it was mean in the House of Commons to take the burthen off of themselves, and lay it on posterity. He was convinced it would be a tax hateful to the public. That and the wine Bill he was persuaded would be considered as two of the most unpopular Bills of the present parliament.

Mr. *Harrison* wished to be informed in the case of entails, suppose a man left different estates to his sons, and the first dying, and the second succeeding to his brother, would he inherit in that case directly as from his father; or, would he be liable to the tax collaterally, as inheriting from a brother? He thought that the Bill would considerably injure the sale of lands; for who would risk a purchase when he might be liable to a surcharge in consequence of the tax? He trusted if the Bill passed that House, they would pay more attention to it in the lords.

Mr. *M. Robinson* said, that the right honourable gentleman began now to trample on the public, in whose good opinion he had risen to his present pitch of power. The tax would ultimately draw the whole of the landed property of the kingdom into the hands of government, and hence, sink the whole capital.

Mr. *Buller* objected to the principle of the Bill, and thought that so important a measure should not have been left to so late a period of the session and of the Parliament, when it could not obtain the consideration it required.

The *Solicitor General* said, that the principle of the measure had at least been long before the House. It was said on a former occasion, why, for the paltry sum of 100,000*l.* introduce the precedent of a tax of this nature; If this was really a tax on capital, surely that sum bore little proportion to the landed capital of the country. In fact, it was a tax on income, to be paid by instalments during the first four years of possession.

Mr. *Fox* said, that all the objections to this measure remained in full force. It was in fact what he had stated it, a tax upon capital, as it was levied in proportion to that capital. If it were really a tax upon income, why not fairly lay it upon income? It was said that it was to be paid by instalments during the first four years, but if the same was paid by the man

man that enjoyed four and the man that enjoyed forty years, it could not with propriety be said to be a tax upon income. A tax on the capital operates, he observed, as the greatest disadvantage to every country; and if any one circumstance, more than another, had tended to raise this country to its present pitch of riches, it has been from the free tenures of property. It has been said that the tenures of property have been at the disposal of the proprietors. The facility of selling land is the greatest of all other spurs to industry and the accumulation of property; this, from the blessing of our constitution, was so unhackled, that it had the happiest consequences. The present tax would so affect the disposal of property, that a person, at his death, could not bequeath, without leaving his fortune subject to a great defalcation. In all cases where the payment of the tax depended upon the terms of succession, production of deeds was inevitable. Whether a brother succeeded as heir to his brother or to his father, in a variety of possible cases, he would be liable or not liable to the tax; of course a minute examination of settlements would be necessary, if the tax was meant to be effectively levied. With regard to the levying 100,000*l.* by the tax, it was not the extent of the sum, but the precedent that was thought to be dangerous: it might be extended to direct succession; and he saw no difference in the principle. It was said, there was less right to expect in the cases subject to the tax; but there were many instances where the expectation was greater in collateral than in direct descent, as in the case of entails, where the heir had a greater certainty of the possession than a son, whose father might dispose of what part of his estate he pleased. Upon the whole, there was no principle of a tax more destructive than that which tended to destroy forcibly the power of exchange and transmission, and thereby lessen the desire of acquisition. And, as this Bill encroached upon this principle, he hoped, notwithstanding the result of former divisions, that the House would consider seriously the consequences that might follow so new and unprecedented a system of taxation.

The Secretary at War said, he considered this tax in a different point of view from the right honourable gentleman who spoke last. It appeared to him a tax rated according to the amount of the person's property, and by no means oppressive in its nature. The main objection which was stated to this tax, was, that it was a tax upon capital; but it was not so clear as they represented it, that all taxes upon capital were bad; on the contrary, it was the opinion of many writers of

great eminence upon this subject, that a tax upon capital was the best mode of taxation, provided it could be laid on equally. One of the great objections to a tax upon capital was, that it operated unequally, because a man's expences were not in proportion to his capital; but that objection did not attach upon this tax, because it operated in the fairest manner, and at the time when there could be the least objection to pay it, viz. at the moment when he came to the possession of the estate, and before he could have formed any establishment. Gentlemen contended, that it was impolitic to burden the transfer of property in a commercial country like this; it certainly was to be avoided as much as possible; but property must be taxed, and the question was, whether this was not as unobjectionable a mode as any that could be devised? Another objection to this tax was, that in a course of years, it would swallow up the whole capital; it certainly would. Every tax must, in a great number of years, have that effect. He had not had an opportunity of giving this Bill the consideration he should have done, but this was the opinion he had formed upon it, which opinion was not in the least altered by any thing he had heard from the gentlemen on the other side.

General Smith spoke against the Bill, as a paltry expedient for raising a trifling sum, which could have been much better supplied by different means.

Sir William Pulteney objected to the Bill, as containing a principle, which, if adopted, would establish a fatal precedent on the financial system of the country. The first Bill went entirely to tax the capital, as landed property was valued at twenty-eight years purchase, and the present Bill was only substituted on account of the objectionable nature of the former, but although it was more mild, it did not vary in its principle. Property in the funds might be liable to such a tax for aught he knew, for if a shilling duty was laid upon every 100*l.* invested in the funds, there would be no difference in principle. The right honourable gentleman defended the tax upon the principle of taking money from those who were able to pay it, which was neither more nor less than the principle of an highwayman. The Bill acted against the constitution, which imposed taxes on articles, that it might be optional to every one, whether he would use the article so taxed; but this Bill declares that if the subject has money, government will have a share in it.

It had been contended, that it was not a tax upon capital, but upon income, he nevertheless asserted that it was, in fact, a tax upon capital, levied in a most insidious mode. It attached at first only upon collateral heirs, but in a short time it might

be

be extended to lineal heirs, and from a small tax to a greater amount, till it swallowed up the whole capital of the kingdom. Some writers had contended for their property of taxing the capital of a country, a system which was certainly liable to very great objections; was there however any writer upon the subject of finance, who had ever proposed, first, to tax every article of consumption, and then to tax the capital. He had also a very weighty objection to the Bill, on constitutional grounds. The taxes in this country, generally speaking, fell equally upon all, but in this instance, a tax was imposed upon a particular class of individuals, which, if it was carried through, he was convinced, would excite such a ferment in the country, as to render it necessary to be repealed. The consequences to be apprehended were precisely similar to those that would follow from a tax being imposed upon London, for instance, and not upon the rest of the country; whereas, were it universal in its operation, it would be patiently borne. To this partial mode of taxation, our losing America was to be attributed, he cautioned the minister therefore against trying similar expedients, lest consequences still more serious should result from them. The apology set up was, that the sum was small; but did not stamps, which at first only yielded a trifle, at this time produce an annual revenue of a million sterling. The best time to check innovations, was undoubtedly, when they were first proposed; once allowed fairly to commence, there was no calculating to what lengths they might be carried. On these grounds, Sir William said, he hoped the minister would relinquish the present tax, and find out a more eligible source of revenue.

Mr. *Bastard* declared he should have thought the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) the last man who would have held out in the defence of family estates, and when he said he did not know the principle of the Bill, he would tell him, it originated in the constituent assembly of France, where the tree grew, and the fruit was now brought over to the British parliament, to see how it would please British palates. He attacked the Bill upon the ground of its being partial and oppressive, and tending to excite disputes between landlord and tenant, in one word, to embroil the peace of the community. By the provisions of the Bill, the commissioner of the tax, an office which, from the odious nature of the employment, in the present instance, few he imagined would be inclined to accept, was authorised to interfere between the landlord and the tenant, and to settle the differences which might subsist between them, according to the dictates of his caprice. He had himself lost

an overcharge once upon the assessed taxes, rather than experience the great trouble and inconvenience of recovery, and such would be the case with persons implicated in this Bill.—Why, he asked, if the Bill were only a tax on income, were not pensions and places by reversion subjected to the tax, and made equally liable with land? He begged that the House, before they sanctioned the Bill, would consider the weight of taxes to which land was already subjected. It reminded him of the fable of the boy, who ripped up the fowl that laid the golden eggs, in order to grow rich at once; and who, by this rash expedient, entirely lost the treasure. The present Bill, if it was passed, he was afraid, would rip up the fowl to which it was indebted for its wealth, and destroy the means of its future support.

Mr. *M. Montague* said, he thought there was great inconsistency in the arguments of those gentlemen who opposed the Bill.—It had been said that it was the principle of a robber to say, “You have money, therefore, I will take it from you;” he begged leave, however, to ask the House, if money was not to be taken from those who had it, from whom was it to be taken? But this was not robbing a man of his property; it was only taking a part to preserve the whole from the effects of Jacobinical principles.

Sir *Adam Ferguson* said, that whoever had been the framers of the Bill, they certainly had been entirely ignorant of the law of Scotland, since its provisions, as they at present stood, would be found to be utterly impracticable in that part of the kingdom. Sir Adam went into a detailed discussion of the different clauses in the Bill, in support of his opinion. In the case which had been put of the liability of a second son to pay the tax in case of the death of his elder brother, he had no difficulty in saying, that by the law of Scotland the second son was clearly liable to the tax, which was not intended, as he understood, by the framers of the Bill. One clause, viz. that for exempting mortgaged estates from the tax was certainly a proper exception; no mention however was made of estates incumbered with personal debts, which by the law of Scotland, were understood to constitute as fair a claim upon the estate as a mortgage. He stated these and other observations, with a view of shewing the necessity of making some alterations in the Bill, if they wished it to prove effective. He however objected to the tax altogether, as one that would be particularly unpopular in Scotland, where a strong partiality for family estates prevailed, a partiality which it was wise to encourage, but which the present Bill tended in no inconsiderable degree

degree to diminish and to mortify those who entertained it. Sir Adam went regularly through the Bill, clause by clause, and concluded with declaring that he should give his vote against it.

The *Attorney General* declared that he had not heard any arguments that satisfied his mind either for rejection or postponing the Bill. He expected the landed men would oppose it; as to the objections of the worthy baronet behind him, however, he thought they had no foundation in the contents of the Bill, and the language might be amended. The arguments of the other worthy baronet did not appear to him to be either fair or candid; if there could be any distinction, this was a tax upon income, since if a man came to the succession of an estate fee simple, the ratio of the tax was taken in the proportion of his life estates, and provided he died before the expiration of the first four years, the money was not payable. When it was objected that the spirit of this Bill was against the spirit of the constitution, in not preserving an equality, he was surprised that the legacy tax, which passed in 1789 upon the same principle, and was afterwards increased in 1791, and again increased, had been forgotten. He concluded with observing, that the Bill was not, in his opinion, liable to more objections than many other of the taxes for the last half century. Nothing had been advanced against the Bill that induced him to vote for the postponement of it for the time proposed, at the same time he should be glad that the objections which had been stated, should have a free discussion.

Sir *A. Ferguson* explained.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he could not give a silent vote on the question. He would not follow the learned baronet (Sir Adam Ferguson) through the long detail of the difference between the English and Scotch laws. What had fallen from gentlemen on both sides of the House, many of whom could not possibly be actuated by party motives, would, he trusted, induce the right honourable gentleman to grant the delay, which he perceived in a certain degree was wrung from him, in consequence of the arguments which he had heard that night. The *Attorney General* had made some observations on the taxes imposed for the last fifty years, and asserted, that in his mind, the present tax was less exceptionable than any he had remembered for that period. The present however, Mr. *Sheridan* said, he was convinced, was the most execrable measure of finance that ever came before parliament, and if he excepted the Legacy Bill, it was merely because it had been sanctioned by an act of the legislature. He had no scruple to say, that both with re-
spect

spect to the Scotch and English laws, the present Bill was utterly impracticable, and if time were allowed, any gentleman who examined it with a keen eye would see that it abounded with the grossest errors and inconsistencies. He professed himself adverse to any tax that shifted the burden to posterity; as he thought that those who submitted to measures which caused taxation, should feel the burden, because its pressure might operate to prevent them from supporting the present irrational system of warfare. He had used this language on a former occasion, and he would use it again, though it were perverted as heretofore without doors by those who made him say, that he wished that the people were heavily burdened with taxes. The present measure was defended on the grounds, that it was a tax to support a war that prevented the introduction of jacobin principles, and to prevent the poor from robbing the rich. Was the measure defensible on those grounds, that his Majesty's ministers were justifiable in robbing the rich in preference to the poor? Such an argument reminded him of the shepherd in the fable, who said he had a mode of curing the sheep of the rot, but when asked how, he replied, *by cutting their throats.*

Mr. *W. Smith* opposed the principle of the Bill, and the clause particularly which related to quarries and mines, as these belonged, in many instances, to the proprietor of the soil, and would be liable to a double tax.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer reminded the House that the only question now was, whether the Bill should be postponed for three months, which was equal to rejecting the Bill. That he should be against postponing it; in the consideration of the report however there would be an opportunity of discussing many of the points which had been pressed in the course of the debate.

Mr. *Martin* took notice of its having been said it was surprising that the Bill should be so unpopular out of doors, and so little opposition given to it in that House. He had seen too many things of that kind to make it at all surprising to him in this instance. It would always be so until the people had a better representation in parliament. He disapproved of the Bill.

The question was then put, the gallery cleared, a division took place, when there were.

<i>Ayes, (for the Bill),</i>	-	81
<i>Noes,</i>	-	52
<i>Majority,</i>		29

The

The House then proceeded to take the report into consideration.

General Macleod gave notice that he should bring forward a subject of great importance, on which he hoped for a full attendance and great attention. The subject was upon barracks. The discussion was appointed for Friday, by the desire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The House then proceeded in the report on the Landed Estate Bill; in the course of which,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, that he should have a measure to propose on the third reading of the Bill, by way of obviating some objections with regard to the operation it might have, as it stood, upon property in mines.

The amendments were then all read, agreed to, the Bill ordered to be engrossed, and to be read a third time on Thursday, if then engrossed, and to be printed.

General Smith moved, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to regulate the stock purse of the militia regiments, &c.—
Granted.

AUSTRIAN LOAN.

Mr. Grey reminded the House, that on the opening of the budget, the right honourable gentleman (*Mr. Pitt*) had thrown out a hint of the possibility of another loan to the Emperor; and that he reserved to himself a discretionary power of affording pecuniary assistance to his Imperial Majesty, if the nature of existing circumstances should render such a measure expedient and necessary. He now therefore would take the liberty of putting the question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of asking him whether he persevered in the intention of granting such assistance? If the right honourable gentleman had such a measure in contemplation, he (*Mr. Grey*) must beg of him to name a day for bringing it forward, as in that case he should think it his duty to move a call for the House.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, said, in answer to the question of the honourable gentleman, it was not his intention, in the course of the present session of parliament, to make any proposition of that kind.

SLAVE CARRYING BILL.

Sir William Dolben moved the order of the day on the Bill for regulating the mode of carrying negroes from Africa to the West Indies, &c. which being read,

General Tarleton presented a petition from Liverpool, praying

ing that the Bill may not pass into a law.—Referred to the committee on the Bill.

Sir William Dalben then observed, that it was too late to go into the committee of the whole House on this Bill that night, and therefore he should move that the House should go into that committee on Wednesday next.

Mr. William Smith desired the House to consider, whether or not they were likely to have a full attendance on that day, for that the subject was of very great importance, and deserved the serious attention of the House; at all events, care should be taken that the Bill should not be lost by the lateness of the session.

The Bill was then ordered to be committed to a committee of the whole House on Wednesday next.

Mr. Sheridan said, that he learnt he was misunderstood with regard to the motion which he intended to make on the papers now before the House, relative to the conduct of the West India and Quiberon expedition. He did not wish at all events to delay his motion upon that subject to Wednesday se'nnight. He understood that all the papers laid before the House, upon that subject, would be printed by Thursday, and therefore he should make his motion on Friday next.

After a few words from *Mr. Dundas*, *Mr. Sheridan's* motion was understood to stand for next Friday.

Mr. Sheridan observed, that his honourable friend (*Mr. Grey*) had asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question, whether he intended that an Austrian loan should take place? To which the right honourable gentleman answered, "Not in the present session." This answer was a little ambiguous. He supposed the right honourable gentleman did not mean to propose another Austrian loan. Were they to understand, that no money would be advanced to the Emperor from the executive government of this country.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said in reply, "The question, as it is now put to me, is one which I cannot answer. One question is, whether I shall propose a loan to the Emperor in another session? To that I say, that whether a further loan be proposed to the Emperor in another session or not, it must be regulated by the circumstances that shall then exist. I have no difficulty, however, in saying, that if at any other period it shall be necessary for the express purpose of considering the propriety of a loan to the Emperor, to call on parliament, I may do so; I do not mean to say I may not call on parliament for that purpose, if it appears to me to be according to the general interests of the common cause, to do so. On the contrary, I admit that

that it may be necessary and proper. I beg therefore it may be understood, that I do not give up an Austrian loan this year. I only say I shall not propose it this session."

Mr. Grey in observation upon this reply of the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "The right honourable gentleman now says he does not mean to debar himself from calling on parliament in a future session, if necessary, for the purpose of granting a loan to the Emperor; before he comes to pledge the House however to any thing upon that subject, we have a right to enquire, Whether he has it in contemplation to advance to the Emperor, under any pretence whatever of serving the common cause, any sum of money without the consent of parliament? Am I to understand this from him, that he has it not in contemplation to propose to advance money to the Emperor during the recess? Because if he has it in contemplation to advance money to the Emperor at this moment, under the plea of public necessity, and to propose the ratification of that act in a future session of parliament, or perhaps to a new parliament, I should endeavour to record a determination of this House, at least I should propose it to the house before we separate, that, to advance money to the Emperor without the consent of parliament is a high crime and misdemeanour, for this, in such a case, appears to me to be our duty."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose again and said, "If his Majesty's ministers should see circumstances which should induce them to advance money to the Emperor, or any other of his Majesty's allies, for fulfilling the purpose of the alliance, what they should advance is a question to which I cannot be called upon to give an answer. His Majesty's ministers must exercise their discretion upon that subject. In the exercise of that discretion they will be responsible to parliament. If any such necessity should arise, that will be a fit subject for the consideration of parliament, and then the question will be "Whether parliament shall be satisfied with the exercise of that discretion?" Therefore I conceive I cannot give a better answer at this time.

Mr. Grey once more addressed the chair: "I cannot suffer a matter of so much importance to pass in this manner. It is the duty of this house to exercise its own rights and functions and not to transmit the exercise of them to others. I do not ask whether, in some possible event, a case might not arise on which the king's ministers might not exercise their discretion, but whether they think it possible that such a case arises out of the present matter, or whether they have it in contemplation? The right honourable gentleman shewed us what he could do

in this way three years ago. He should shew us now whether he has any thing of this kind in contemplation. If he has, he ought to propose it to the house. Should he omit to propose it, and should afterwards proceed upon any contemplation that he may have now, I say such conduct will be a high crime and misdemeanour, and for which he will, I hope be very seriously responsible hereafter. He talks lightly of these things, but the day may come when they will be serious matters to him. I am willing to move this resolution now if necessary, 'That to apply money during the recess, for a loan to the emperor, without the consent of parliament, is a high crime and misdemeanour.'

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "The honourable gentleman will consider whether he will make any proposition to the house or not; it is for him to judge for his own guidance. To his question I shall not make any other answer."

Mr. Grey. "Then my question, I understand, is answered."

Mr. M. Robinson was proceeding, when the speaker observed there was no question before the house.

Mr. Sheridan contended that the conversation was certainly regular. Nothing could be more clear than that a question such as that put by his honourable friend was regular. He concurred entirely with his honourable friend, that if the minister advanced to the emperor any money which he now had in contemplation to advance during the recess, without the consent of parliament, he would be guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour.

Mr. Secretary Dundas called to order: he apprehended that the whole of the conversation was out of order, there being another proceeding before the House.

The Speaker said, a question was about to be put; but he had not put it.

Mr. Sheridan then said, that, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had it in contemplation to furnish the Emperor with money in the recess, he should say so, in order that the House might give him authority for so doing. What objection could he have? Was it not safer for himself, than afterwards to come to the House for an indemnity? He had no objection to move, that, if the minister had it at present in contemplation to send money to the Emperor, and should send it during the recess, without the consent of parliament, he would be guilty of a high misdemeanour.

This produced a cry of *move! move!* from the treasury bench.

bench, and the business was put an end to by the Speaker's calling for the other orders of the day.

The Bill for the relief of the poor curates was passed.

The Bill for relieving the families of persons drawn by lot, to serve in the militia, passed the committee, and the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

The Quakers Bill went into a committee; Mr. Jodrell gave notice that, on the third reading, he should oppose the clause which makes the affirmation of Quakers evidence in criminal cases. The other orders of the day being disposed of, the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, May 10.

FINANCE.

The *Earl of Maira* reminded their lordships of what he had said in the Debate on the motion of the noble marquis a few days since, (on Monday May 2.) when a noble baron not then present, (lord Auckland) went into a variety of statements founded on a comparative view of certain public circumstances in the respective periods of 1783-4, and 1795-6. The Earl said it struck him at the time that many points in the noble baron's statements were either erroneous in their data, or false in the deductions drawn from them. He had taken pains since to examine them, and was confirmed in the opinion he had formed at the moment; meaning therefore to trouble their lordships with some observations on those statements he lamented the absence of the noble baron that day, and still more the cause of it, understanding as he had done, that it was occasioned by a domestic misfortune. He had not he said, been so deficient in politeness, as not to write to the noble baron and apprise him of his intention, in consequence of which he received an answer stating the reason of his not being possible for him to be present; holding in his hand, however, a printed copy of the noble baron's speech, which he understood to have the noble baron's authority, he would proceed to make his observations. The earl then adverted in a general manner to some of lord Auckland's leading statements, which he said he would not discuss in detail, as the noble baron was not present to explain on what grounds he rested the arguments that he relied on, but what he considered as more material, he must call their lordships attention to, was the comparative view between certain public circumstances in the respective periods of 1783-4 and 1795-6, and here he must
premise

premise that there could be no fair comparison drawn between the state of the finances and resources of the country in 1783, and the year 1795, the situation and circumstances of affairs were so widely different, and had undergone so many changes, that the noble baron might just as well have chosen the year 1683 as 1783, or 1583, or 1483. But did any man imagine that the Peace establishment at the conclusion of the war would be brought within so small a compass as fifteen millions? Most certainly it could not be expected. To return however to the printed speech. The earl then went at some length into an examination of the various articles of finance and resources, as they were stated by lord Auckland to stand at present, and referred to so many arithmetical calculations, and matters of complicated account, that the ablest reporter could not possibly follow him without danger of repeated error and momentary misrepresentation, it must suffice for the reporter of this page to inform the reader that the Earl dwelt much upon the manner in which lord Auckland had closed his comparative account by what, he termed a striking and important statement:

“ Amount of revenue (including the land and malt) <i>below</i>			
“ the computed expenditure on a peace establishment of fifteen			
“ millions	1783	£ 2,000,000	
“ Ditto <i>above</i> the computed expenditure on a similar peace			
“ establishment, with the addition of increased charges for the			
“ debt incurred by the present war	1795	£ 3,400,000	
If we compare the excess of 1796 (£ 3,400,000) with the deficiency of 1783 (£ 2,000,000), the difference of revenue in favour of the latter period will be £ 5,400,000.			

The Earl professed that he did not clearly comprehend what the noble baron meant by “*below* the computed expenditure” and “*above* the computed expenditure.” After reasoning for some time upon the different statements of lord Auckland, earl Moira made many forcible observations on the great importance of parliament’s constantly recurring to an examination into the state of the finances, and the effect that varying circumstances had with regard to the resources of the country. On that ground he was persuaded, that it would be highly satisfactory to their lordships, and to the public out of doors, to be informed on this important subject, and that ministers should avail themselves of every opportunity to satisfy the nation, that they were guided by a becoming œconomy in the expenditure of the public money. The earl before he sat down referred to the former part of his argument respecting lord Auckland’s speech and said he should be glad to hear if any of the noble lords in office could take upon themselves to explain those parts of the noble baron’s statements

statements respecting which he had troubled their lordships with his remarks, and reasoning.

Lord Grenville said, he was at all times happy to pay attention to what came from the noble earl, for whose character and talents no man entertained a more sincere respect; the subject certainly deserved the most serious attention of their lordships, and he could have no objection to the frequent discussion of it, because he was convinced, that on the whole, he could congratulate that House and the country, on the prosperity of our finance, and the prospect of that prosperity. He for one had no scruple to declare, that he agreed completely in the statements, calculations and comparisons of his noble friend who was absent, the cause of which absence he regretted in common with the noble earl. With regard to the particular statements, the correctness of which the noble earl had questioned, he was enabled from a communication that he had been favoured with by his noble friend, to shew the House, that they were founded on indisputable data, and that his noble friend's inferences and reasoning upon them were warrantable and just. His lordship there from a written statement, drawn up, as we conceived, by Lord Auckland, went through an examination of all the points in question, proving by fair calculations and immediate references to the various accounts upon the table, that his argument and that of his noble friend was supported by the papers before their lordships. After having with great perspicuity gone through all the statements that the Earl of Moira had adverted to, he said, our taxes were productive, even beyond the most sanguine expectation; and, under this impression, he was anxious at all times to enter into the detail of the several branches of the public revenue. Their lordships well knew, that a committee was appointed in 1791, to examine the public accounts on the most authentic documents, and state their opinion accordingly. That committee was composed of men of the first character. The House was long in possession of their report; and the House would recollect, that when the committee had stated, that according to the best exercise of their judgment, experience, and knowledge of the resources of this country, the amount of the permanent taxes, independent of the land and malt, would be annually thirteen millions and a half, it was insisted on by some noble lords, that the statement was too sanguine. What was the result? What was at that time a mere matter of calculation, had since been confirmed by facts. That committee had undoubtedly calculated for contingency, they could not, however, at the time, foresee that this country would

would be involved in a war different from every other war in which this country was ever engaged, the leading feature of which was necessarily immense expence: yet, with all these unforeseen events, they had not calculated the income of the country too highly; in the course of the last three years, the the total amount of the permanent taxes exclusive, as he had already observed of the land and malt, rose to the immense sum of forty-two millions, or very near it. In short, on an average of the three last years, it amounted to thirteen millions seven hundred and sixty-four thousand a year; he flattered himself therefore, that it would maintain that amount under all the peculiar circumstances of the war. He conceived himself entitled to congratulate their lordships and the country on another circumstance and that was, that the old taxes appeared to have found their level, or, at least, to have come up to their estimates; this was so astonishing, that it scarcely was to be believed, if it could not be proved by undeniable documents; his lordship referred to a variety of official statements of the different branches of the public revenue, comprehending the customs, stamps, incidents, and excise, in order to shew that under all the peculiar circumstances of the present war, the taxes were productive, and that in almost every instance, they had exceeded the estimates; he therefore held himself warranted from the prospect of affairs, to believe with some degree of confidence, there was little apprehension of any deficiency.

The Earl of Moira said, that however anxious he might be from his wishes to accede to the opinion of the noble secretary, he was sorry to find, that on the present occasion, he should be obliged to differ with him in the most material parts of his speech. The noble earl lamented, that when the questions of finance were agitated in that House, that the arguments were not confined to the documents on the table at the time; every argument and every assertion that could be proved and compared by such documents, he should ever consider as extraneous and entirely foreign to the question, in short as an unnecessary waste of the time of the House. If he could not, therefore, succeed by prevailing on gentlemen to confine themselves to this mode, he would not transgress it himself. He would take accounts merely as he found them in the papers on their lordships table; if the facts were not correct in these papers, ministers, and not he, were to blame:—they had brought them down themselves, and of course they must be the best judges whether they were correct or not; but he would for the moment suppose them to be perfectly correct. By the accounts on the table, it was stated that the annual amount of
the

the permanent taxes, including the land and malt, which he estimated at two millions and a half, amounted to eighteen millions and a half. This was precisely the sum in round numbers, as stated in the papers at that time before the House. The annual expenditure of the peace establishment as stated by the committee in 1791 in their report, was fifteen millions and a half: to this was to be added, two millions and a half, the interest of the different sums of money borrowed in the course of the present war up to the 5th of April 1795. This, added to the former sum, would raise it to eighteen millions; so that the whole excess was only half a million but their lordships should observe, that in this account there was no provision made for the annual million to be set apart for the extinction of the national debt, and two hundred thousand pounds above that sum. Another *item* was to be added to this; viz. the sum of eight hundred thousand pounds for the seven millions which the minister borrowed in his supplementary budget. Adding all these sums together, therefore the aggregate would not exceed this sum, and less it could not be; and what was the income to meet it? Eighteen millions and a half: So that in the very first instance, on the face of these papers, there was a defalcation of one million five hundred thousand pounds: To make up this deficiency would require additional taxes.

The noble Secretary, it was true, had said, that in addition to the permanent taxes, together with the land and malt, ministers had not taken the five hundred thousand pounds from the East India company, nor the lottery, which was estimated at three hundred thousand pounds. He thought the minister acted prudently in keeping these two articles distinct, because these resources, in his opinion were precarious: As to the first, he was not certain that the East India company had paid a shilling yet or would be able to pay any this year; and as to the second, it went to barter the morals of the people for revenue. Another point, to which he wished to draw the attention of their lordships. The noble secretary had stated, in a kind of triumphant air, that the old taxes had maintained and come up to their estimates; he wished to see this verified from authentic documents; were it a fact however, up to the present time, he would not venture to flatter himself that it would continue so; because when new taxes were imposed, they would necessarily prove a draw-back on old taxes; a man of a moderate income would suit his expenditure to that income; a succession of new taxes would teach him economy; and articles of luxury would unavoidably give way to articles

of convenience. It was not his intention to follow the noble secretary through the detail of the production of the different branches of the revenue, as he did not wish to divert the attention of their lordships from the prominent points which he had stated; he was convinced, however, and could prove it from unanswerable arguments, and undeniable facts, that there was a daily defalcation in the different branches of the revenue, particularly in the customs. He hoped what he had stated was plain, he should nevertheless be ready to yield to correction; he had only one object in view in agitating this question, which was, to satisfy the minds of those on the subject, of such momentous concern to every man, that did not wish to shut their eyes to the situation of the country; at the same time he disclaimed either entertaining himself, or wishing to induce others to entertain despondent ideas of the resources of the country; he was persuaded our resources were great, but large in their extent, and solid and substantial in their means as they were, if improvidently applied, and if their application were not constantly watched over, they might be fruitlessly wasted and the country ruined.

Lord Grenville rose once more to assert that the old taxes had maintained their several estimated amounts to an astonishing degree; and that he was persuaded, from every circumstance, that they would continue to maintain it.

Lord Hawkebury reminded the House that no blame was imputable to their lordships for not having the subject fully before them. They had waited six weeks for the motion, and when it was brought, the noble marquis thought proper to forbear going into the question of finance. With regard to what his noble friend, the secretary of state had said, it was difficult to explain the meaning of another in reasoning and arguments founded on calculation, but his noble friend had done it as well as any one could do. His noble friend had stated every circumstance with candour and correctness; the permanent taxes were productive beyond the most sanguine hopes. The committee of 1791 was composed of gentlemen who had some character to maintain, and they certainly gave a proof of it; their estimates were founded on good sense and experience, and time had proved, that in their estimates of the resources of this country, they were not too sanguine; as to the production of the permanent taxes, the last three years, amounted to a considerable sum beyond the statement of that Committee. To prove that there were no grounds for the despondent picture of our resources, that some persons seemed to take a melancholy pleasure in holding out, his lordship went somewhat at large into the
sub-

subject, and stated the reasons on which he had formed the favourable opinion, he was satisfied, he was warranted, in entertaining. He shewed the state of the commerce of the country, and the state of our navigation, each of which served to hold out the most flattering prospect of increasing prosperity. His lordship concluded with declaring that he did not see any good end that could be served by frequent attempts to depreciate the resources of the country, as it furnished the enemy with a temporary triumph and could answer no good purpose at home.

The Earl of Moira repeated his declaration, that in bringing forward any observations on this subject, he had not the most distant idea of attaching any despondency to our situation; he was well convinced of the solidity of our resources, he wished, however to see those resources managed with œconomy—By œconomy, he did not mean that paltry kind of saving, which might pass with narrow minds for œconomy, that money which was expended the most profitably in the administration of the public affairs, was the most œconomically disposed of; he only wished that ministers, when they talked on the matter, would do it in something of a sober tone, suited to the gravity of the subject. With regard to what he had said that day, he felt himself in a manner pledged to make some reply to the speech of the noble baron, in a late debate, and he held the printed speech of the noble baron to be authentic, as it was avowed by him; nor indeed could any consideration of the resources of the country be inopportune; so far from furnishing the enemies of the country with a temporary triumph, it would prove that we were not afraid of looking our situation in the face.

The Earl of Coventry expressed his astonishment that noble lords should occupy so much of the time of the House in discussing a subject, at present utterly beyond the reach of the most comprehensive mind to form an opinion upon. The time for debating the extent of the future peace establishment was not yet arrived. *Flagrante bello* it was impossible to guess what would be fit to be the peace establishment of this country; it must depend on a variety of contingent and relative circumstances; could any man at present say what number of troops France would consent to maintain on the Continent, at the end of the war, and without knowing it, could any man say, what internal force it would be prudent for this country to keep up? Their lordships had been called down to hear another subject discussed. Why then should they unnecessarily waste their time? Sufficient to the day was the evil thereof,

and he hoped the country would be found equal to meet the evil of the day. He thanked God we had hitherto proved equal to the difficulty of the contest, and he trusted that we should continue to be found equal to support the continuance of the war, till a fit moment should arrive for our obtaining a safe and honourable peace.

Lord Grenville observed to their lordships, that we had been for some time engaged in an expensive war: yet hitherto we had provided for all the expences of the war. In the present year we had voted certain sums to defray the expence—We had, he trusted, voted sufficiently. He thought then it would be time enough to attempt to depreciate our resources, when any of the services failed for want of a proper supply.

The Marquis of Lansdown said, he could not have believed the printed speech produced by the noble earl to have been authentic, had not the noble earl declared, that the noble baron avowed it, because he knew the noble earl's habits of urbanity and politeness too well, to have imagined that he would not have done him justice, and stated fairly what he said. From the distinguishing candour of the noble lord, he was inclined to believe that what he had said, had escaped his recollection, because he appealed to noble lords, if he had not in the first instance referred to the reports of the commissioners of accounts, as the first ground of his argument, and expressly stated the appropriation act, and its violation as another. He had given notice of his motion six weeks ago, and the object of it had been stated in every newspaper. He was, therefore, surprized to hear the noble lord, (*Lord Hawkesbury*) complain that they had waited six weeks for the motion, when the fact notoriously was, that he had waited for the papers, which government had kept back, and some of them were not delivered till the very morning of the day, on which the motion was to be made. He repeated it that he had particularly called the attention of the House to the reports of the commissioners of accounts, which contained matters well worth their lordships most serious consideration. Those reports and the papers on the table, presented subjects so multifarious, that it was impossible to go into all of them. He had, therefore, chosen to take up the great leading and constitutional principles for consideration, in opposition to the mere figures and matters of arithmetic, important as the latter undoubtedly were. Their lordships all knew, that such was the intricacy of accounts, even among individuals, that it was rare to find six men who agreed in them. Lawyers and judges were so sensible of this, that they never attempted to settle them themselves, or even
send

send them to a jury; they always left them to merchants. If this was the case in respect to accounts between man and man, trader and trader, what must it be in regard to the accounts of a great nation; indeed he was persuaded that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to come to any issue on such a subject in that House. Knowing how easy it was to puzzle their lordships with figures, he had called the attention of the House to the more important point, the violation of the constitution and the laws of the land, of which ministers had been guilty. The noble lord who spoke lately (Lord Hawkesbury) shone on figures, he was made up of figures, figures, figures! He lived upon figures, dreamt of little else, and could speak of nothing but two millions, three hundred pounds, fifteen shillings and fourpence halfpenny, or two millions, two hundred and fifty five pounds, ten shillings and threepence three farthings; when the noble lord, therefore, found any argument against him, he always resorted to his favourite maze and led their lordships through a labyrinth of millions, thousands, hundreds, pounds, shillings, pence, halfpence, and farthings. He for his own part had chosen to call the consideration of the House to something of still higher importance, to principles and not to pence, to the constitution and not to arithmetic, because the principles of the constitution were not only more important but more intelligible. The subjects in the papers on their lordships table comprehended great matters and great principles, he had, as he before-mentioned, selected from them the most interesting, the constitution and the law; he had endeavoured to call their attention to the gradual undermining of the one, and the open violation of the other; his object was to preserve the constitution and the laws entire, and he was persuaded when Englishmen resumed their native character, shook off the torpor that for the moment so strangely benumbed their faculties, and once more felt as Englishmen, they would feel and acknowledge that their best security rested on confining ministers within the bounds of the constitution. The appropriation act he in common with every other reflecting man, considered as the most sacred of all others, and therefore it ought to be held the most inviolate. He did not by any means wish or intend to disparage the matter of finance, or the allusion to the peace establishment made that day, both certainly were of great and serious importance, but comparatively of little when set in opposition to principles, when contrasted with the constitution and the laws. To go into a question of finance before they considered how the country stood with regard to its constitution and the laws, would

would be like a man of twenty thousand a year, wasting a third part of his income, 6 or 7000*l. per annum*, in a lavish manner, and in the midst of his dissipation and extravagance, setting down coolly to calculate how much he should have to live on twenty years hence. As a noble friend of his (the Earl of Coventry) had observed, the peace establishment could not be talked of at present with any possibility of accuracy, because it was impossible to say what troops France would keep up when peace would take place, or what would be then their relative situation at home or abroad. The noble lord (Hawkesbury) had stated that, by attempting to depreciate the revenues of this country, it would hold out a certain degree of consolation to the enemy: he did not see how it could have that effect. If it should appear that our finances were not in that flourishing state, notwithstanding the lofty tones of ministers, it would not be the enemy, but the people of this country, that would feel the fatal effects. He was certain for one, that by swelling our finances beyond their due bounds, we should render ourselves no great service with foreign nations, we should in so doing raise their envy, and induce them to believe that we were arriving at an universal monopoly of commerce.

In the debate the other day, he had expressly set aside all the finance part of the argument, because he would not puzzle their lordships. He had then assigned the reasons for endeavouring to call their attention to the most important considerations, and had reserved the other to a noble earl's management, well knowing his ability, his industry, and the infinite pains, he had taken with the subject. He had certainly loosely mentioned the payment of a sum of 40,000*l.* to the Dey of Algiers, but 40,000*l.* in such an enormous scale of expence, as the present ruinous war had occasioned, was as 30,000*l.* gained in proportion to the expenditure of millions. He hoped the subject of finance would be fully gone into by his noble friend, and he should be prepared to give his opinion upon it, whenever the day of debate came.

Lord Hawkesbury said, he was not a little astonished at the manner in which the noble marquis had chosen to express himself. He owned he did not expect to hear either his noble friend (Lord Grenville) or himself complained of for using a few figures, in a conversation immediately turning upon figures and expressly brought on not by them. In spite, however, of the ridicule of the noble marquis, though a mere man of figures, he should be ready to meet the subject of finance fully, whenever it should be brought forward, and he flattered himself he should be able to satisfy their lordships, that

that there was great reason for gratification and comfort, but no ground for despondency in any respect whatsoever.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, the noble lord (*Hawkesbury*) should not have reason to complain of being taken by surprize; he would indulge his lordship with a full opportunity of replying to every remark; for which purpose he should bring forward a motion on the subject of the papers on the table. He wished to bring it forward on an early day: but as the whole expenditure of the present year could not be precisely known, till the committee of supply was closed in the other House he should be obliged to defer it till then. It was at length agreed that the House should be summoned on Lord Lauderdale's notice on Tuesday the 17th instant.

MOTION FOR A CHANGE OF SYSTEM, IN REGARD TO EXTERNAL POLITICS.

The Earl of Guildford said, no apology was necessary from him for calling the attention of the House to the motion of which he had given notice; the public embarrassment in consequence of the war, and the manner in which ministers had conducted it, were so notorious, that there could be but one opinion about the consequences that embarrassment led to, and thus it became a critical time at which it was the duty of every public man, whether a minister, or merely a member of parliament, to come forward with his opinion and advice; and the necessity of attending to the conduct of ministers, never was more manifest than it was at present. One wish only could prevail, viz. a wish for peace upon the best terms that could be obtained from a due consideration of the relative successes of the two countries; their relative force, and the relative probabilities that might be stated from the present appearances. In the address he meant to move, he said, he would state the measures he thought most likely to extricate the country from the lamentable situation in which the misconduct of ministers had involved us; all the difficulties, disasters, and dangers that had happened to us, were to be ascribed to the miserable system of measures pursued by ministers, and still further to the more miserable way in which that system had been carried into execution; all this system then must be completely done away, and a new one adopted, before any good could be expected; indeed there could be but little hopes of success or prosperity, until the House and the ministers were persuaded that they ought to undo all that they had done, and retreat every step they had advanced in this ruinous and absurd contest. While it was allowed on all hands that the country could

could not long exist without peace, they must all lament how little chance there was of obtaining a safe and honourable peace, while the same men were allowed to pursue the same system. Having attempted unsuccessfully last session to convince the House of this, he lamented the necessity of tiring their lordships with stale hacknied topics, but he would dwell on them as shortly as possible; the topics necessarily were the conduct of the war, the incurring it when it could have been avoided by the treatment of Monsieur Chauvelin, the neglect of the opportunity of making peace when we had retaken the greatest part of Austrian Flanders and had Valenciennes in our hands, and might have made honourable terms on the grounds of the success of our arms. He would state his proposition to be this, a total abandonment of the former conduct and system of ministers, and the necessity for that and the other House of parliament to lay before the king a full and fair statement of the real situation into which they had brought the country, by their general conduct for the last three years, from no part of which, it was yet possible to know what was the object of the war. With regard to the commencement of the war, he had uniformly held the same opinion, and whatever had been the conduct of France, there was nothing on our part that looked like a wish to avoid going into it; he referred to the recall of Lord Gower, and the dismissal of Chauvelin. It had been said that the war was necessary for the safety of the constitution of the country; in what particular however was the constitution better by the war? It was clear that the aversion of ministers to peace had prolonged the war, and had cost the country, as had been stated in another place, fifty millions of money, and fifty thousand lives. The original pretences for going to war were not, however, found sufficient for both these purposes, and various other reasons were assigned for the origin of the war, and very different grounds had since been had recourse to; the existence of a republic in France was said to be inconsistent with the safety of the British constitution, and on this idea ministers, strongly supported by a majority, put themselves at the head of a grand confederacy against France. When Holland was protected, and the Netherlands restored, surely every proper aid was gained that Britain interfered for. But wild thoughts, joined to their own warm imaginations, had led them to think that they must not make peace until they had arrived at the gates of Paris; the defeats, disgraces, and dismay that followed those projects were sufficiently known, and this proud confederacy fell to pieces; whether we were du-
ped

ped by our allies, or they deceived by us, was still a question. His lordship pointed out the absurdity of the declarations of our allies upon various occasions. He reprobated in strong terms the conduct of this country by encouraging the royalists to carry on the war in La Vendee; had that ever been proper, ministers by their negligence lost the opportunity when it might have been successful. He adverted to the effect which that affair had upon our West India expedition, and said, though they were deaf to foreign sufferings, they certainly would feel for the distresses that befel Admiral Christian's fleet, and asked what atonement ministers could offer for the incalculable evils which their blunders and incapacity had brought upon the country. After the surrender of Valenciennes, he thought ministers highly blameable for losing the moment of victory to terminate the war, but their not making peace when it was in their hands, shewed that they must have had other views than those ostensibly held forth. If the change in the French government was an objection to making peace, it was one which might last for ever. He took a cursory review of the war as affecting the internal state of the country, and the encroachments upon the constitution which it had given rise to; among others he stated the great dread of military force that had been introduced into the system of government; that vigour beyond the law that had been mentioned in another place as necessary to be resorted to; the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; the use that had been made of the Alien Bill; and those latter Bills founded upon some low disgraceful proceedings, which amounted to a prohibition against meetings of almost any description; those and many other instances he said he could mention as the effects of the war upon the constitution; adding that if the constitution, weakened and encroached upon as it was, was the sort of constitution that ministers wished for, he must say, that he should never feel it matter of exultation. The effect on the finances was equally deplorable, 100 millions were added to our debt; 21 millions had been stated in another place by the finance minister as the lowest probable peace expenditure, though by wiser and more intelligent men, it was thought that it would be much more, and it ought to be recollected, that this was the prediction of one who had hitherto been uniformly false in his predictions, while those of his abler opponents had been uniformly correct and true. If this was the case now, who could anticipate the expense of another campaign. Another, and a very serious consideration, he said, was the drawback on trade occasioned by the war. The King's message, which stated, that there was no objection to

VOL. IV. 1796. 3 L negotiate

negotiate had afforded universal satisfaction, but the subsequent conduct of ministers in not following up the spirit of that message, and letting three months elapse before they attempted to negotiate, was in his opinion disgraceful to the country, and pregnant with mischievous consequences. With regard to the mode of treating with M. Barthelemy; a more awkward attempt was surely never exhibited to the eyes of mankind. Whoever the author of the proposition was he thought him entitled to the thanks of the country, but the negotiation had been conducted in such a manner as almost to induce him to lament that the proposition had ever been made. The notification* was insidious, and the declaration of Mr. Wickham, that he was not empowered to treat, but only authorised to receive an answer whether France was disposed to treat or not was highly unwise, and shewed that it had been the latent motive and meaning of ministers all along to deceive parliament, and hold out a delusion to Europe. The answer made was undoubtedly arrogant and ambitious, but could any one believe that the ministers of this country were sincere when they made the proposition? Let any man read it, and then gravely say, that he believed they made it with a real and *bona fide* intent to obtain a peace! from his soul he must say, that he drew the same conclusions as were drawn by the French; that in our offers we were not sincere. He agreed that the municipal form of any government ought not to be pleaded in bar of any negotiation; it was however easy to see that the arrogance of France was the effect of success, and the extravagant feelings that naturally arose from it; her ambition certainly though an overweening, was not a badly concerted ambition; while our arrogance was the passion of an angry child, and our ambition an ambition to keep the valuable possession of Corsica. He admitted that the resources of the country were solid and consolatory, but great as they were, they might be pushed too far. He reminded their lordships of the case, that in the reign of our great deliverer King William; that prince was obliged to lose the advantage of a whole campaign during a most successful part of the war, for want of specie to pay the army with in Flanders. He warned ministers therefore from incurring a like inconvenience, which under the circumstances of the present war, would be a matter of serious moment, in consequence of carrying things to an extremity by an unlimited export of money. After an animated and severe invective against ministers on the grounds of their assumed imbecility and misconduct, the Earl declared he saw no remedy for the calamities in which they had involved the country.

* Vide Appendix.

country, but to tread back again every step they had taken, and to undo all that they had done; he should therefore move an address to be laid before the throne to that effect, having on a former occasion moved for an enquiry, in vain. His lordship said the motion was long, and with the permission of the House, he would wave reading it, and hand it to the noble and learned lord on the woolfack.

No objection being made, it was read by the Lord Chancellor, and was similar in substance to that moved by Mr. Fox on the same day in the House of Commons, which the reader will find in the following pages.

Lord Sydney objected to these resolutions as the most extraordinary, he had every reason to believe that were ever offered to that or any other House of Parliament.

He declared he never heard so unparliamentary a proceeding as to bring forward on the sudden so long a motion, or rather a pamphlet, for it consisted of thirteen pages, and seemed more like a pamphlet intended for perusal without doors, than a motion, and call on their lordships to swallow the whole at one gulp, and vote a volume that condemned every step they had taken, and every resolution on the war that they had voted for the last three years. The resolutions were of such length, that the noble earl had excused himself from the fatigue of reading them, and had therefore handed them up to be read by the noble and learned lord on the woolfack. He had given such attention to them as he was able; but he really found himself unable to say to what points they went; as far as he could collect from having heard the motion once read, there were several matters stated on which he should be disposed to differ completely from the noble earl, others he could not hear, in fact it was impossible for him to comprehend or understand the whole of a motion so diffuse, so complex, and so full of variety of different matters. He believed this was the first time their lordships, without any previous inquiry, and with no proof either of evidence or argument, were ever called on to address the throne; and, above all, it was incumbent upon the noble mover to have proposed the adjournment of the debate at least for a day, that their lordships might have an opportunity of acquiring some knowledge of the contents of the motion. For these reasons he should vote against it.

The *Duke of Bedford* said he understood motion of equal length had been proposed, if there had not, he should not sturdily reject a good purpose because it might want precedent. He admitted that it was difficult for noble lords to understand the whole of so long and complex a motion at once, and he

agreed with the noble viscount on that head; though the nature of the motion had been stated by his noble friend when he first gave notice, and the topics touched upon were such as had been often discussed, and needed little new investigation. If however noble lords imagined the delay necessary to make up their minds on the subject, he thought it fair to give them time to consider it, and would therefore move to adjourn the consideration of the motion till Monday.

The *Earl of Carlisle* and *Lord Mulgrave* both rose together, but the latter gave way. The earl said he never had witnessed so irregular a proceeding since he had sat in parliament. The first irregularity was for a noble lord to introduce a motion and not state it himself, but on the contrary to hand it at once to the noble lord on the woolsack, and then, which was a greater irregularity, for the noble duke to move to adjourn the debate to a future day, against which day he presumed a motion neither recognized nor received by the House was to be printed, for that he took it for granted was the purpose of the delay.

The *Earl of Carnarvon* said, that what might be properly considered as the motion, was in fact a very short motion. The paper handed up contained a string of articles of impeachment against ministers. The argument of it he could not answer because it contained none, but was mere assertion without reason, and without proof. It would be better to move for the removal of ministers at once, but though he disapproved of parts of the conduct of the war, he could not go that length.

Lord Mulgrave agreed with the noble earl, that nothing could be more irregular than the mode of proceeding, though there certainly was no occasion to adjourn the debate. He declared himself willing to enter upon it then, and if it would be decent for him, not being in a responsible situation to defend the conduct of ministers, he saw enough of the motion to be able to do it at that time, as well as he should be able to do it on Monday. He said, on the first blush of the motion he could oppose a variety of arguments to the different assertions it contained, but he would reserve himself for the debate. There had undoubtedly been much irregularity of proceeding, but he had not heard his noble friend ask to have the motion read.

The *Earl of Guildford* said he should be extremely sorry to be guilty of any irregularity, at which their lordships might reasonably take offence; he begged leave to remind them however, that before he had given the motion out of his hand, he

had

had appealed to them, whether it were with their lordships' consent, that he might wave reading the resolutions. With regard to adjourning the debate, it was a matter of perfect indifference to him: He left it entirely to the House to dispose of the motion and debate as they thought proper.

There being a general exclamation of *go on, go on!* The Duke of Bedford rose and said, he had merely moved to adjourn on what the noble viscount (Lord Sydney) had said, and from a motive of candour; he was nevertheless ready to withdraw it, if the House would permit. The motion of adjournment was then, by general consent, withdrawn.

Lord Hawkesbury objected to the adjournment, he said, he really did not know whether the motion was adjourned or not: the few points that seemed to demand any notice from him, he was then as ready to discuss as he could be at any future time; [The Duke of Bedford informed his lordship that the motion of adjournment was withdrawn.] The motion of the noble earl was so extraordinary a one that he knew not where to begin to reply, the motion being so loaded with different matter. It set out with the commencement of the war, a point that had been often discussed, and respecting which the House declared again and again that its commencement was unavoidable in consequence of the wanton and unprovoked aggression of the French. His lordship in a summary way recapitulated the arguments so often urged on this head; and in like manner touched upon all the topicks referred to in the resolutions, disposing of them point by point. With regard to the alledged disposition of the French to make peace after the surrender of Valenciennes, there having been ever the smallest intimation of such a disposition on the part of France, was a circumstance, of which he had not the slightest knowledge; and he appealed to his noble friend (Lord Grenville) who was officially more likely to be acquainted with the circumstance, whether such a notice had ever been received: the Cabinet denied it completely.

The next object of curious remark was with respect to what kind of treaties had been made with powers, who concluded peace with the French nation, and the nature of these treaties. The King of Spain, for instance, had made peace, and sent an ambassador to Paris. How had they received him? He had addressed the directory in a set figurative speech, to which they returned an answer; they chose however studiously to adhere to their system of discrimination between the people and their sovereign in every respect whatsoever; forgetting who sent the ambassador they were addressing, they never allude to his royal

royal master, and the word *roi*, (king) is never once mentioned in the speech. After dwelling for some time on this, lord Hawkesbury at length came to Mr. Wickham's note communicated through M. Barthelemy, to the executive directory, upon which such unjustifiable reprobation had been passed. His lordship contended, that the only possible way of negotiating under such circumstances, was to authorise Mr. Wickham to proceed no further than merely to put the question, "Are you disposed to treat for peace?" And he believed the question for precedent might be negatively put, where was there a treaty which was not so begun? It contained the only three propositions, which simple and fair meaning could put to a powerful enemy.

The first proposition naturally was, "Are you willing to treat for peace upon fair and honourable conditions, and on what terms?"

The second proposition, "Will you consent to a congress for the negociation of the pacificatory terms?"

The third proposition, "Is there any other mode you like better?"

Having pointed out the necessity of such preliminary questions, his lordship said, he knew Mr. Barthelemy well when he was here, and knew him to be a man extremely well fitted for the business of negotiation. He would have proved far too deep and artful, too well versed in the science of diplomatique finesse for Mr. Wickham, highly as he thought of that gentleman; M. Barthelemy would have wormed out of Mr. Wickham all his purpose, without at all committing himself, and it would have been made a handle against negotiating. The answer of the French Directory clearly evinced that they had no real desire of peace, and justified the note of his majesty's ministers in consequence. As there was no probability of obtaining peace, the only way left was by a vigorous prosecution of the war, which could not be carried on, if the House was to rescind and reprobate their own proceedings, during the war. He should therefore give the question his decided negative.

The *Duke of Grafton*, although rarely in the habit of troubling their lordships with his opinions, admitted there were occasions so paramount as to demand that discharge of what he owed to their lordships, to his country, and to himself. He had, therefore, come forward on the present motion, in which it perfectly coincided with the noble earl. His grace reprobated the principle and conduct of the war, and ardently desired that peace, which it was to be feared would never be concluded

concluded with the present ministers, they having manifestly wished the utter destruction of the republic; and, of course, whenever peace was concluded, it would be impossible to convince the public, that men less obnoxious would not have been able to have made peace upon more favourable conditions. As to the argument of a noble viscount, that we must unsay all that we had been saying, and undo what had been done, he remembered, that at the close of the American war, his majesty's attorney and solicitor general had come down to the other house, for the express purpose of doing away obnoxious acts of the legislature. No man was then ashamed to tread back the path of error. The duke in strong and pathetic terms deprecated the consequences of the strides by which he asserted the constitution of the monarchy was in danger, and though it had stood on the firmest pillars that ever were erected, if it once fell, he greatly feared that venerable edifice would never rear its head again. He also deplored a military government that threatened annihilation to the liberties of the people.

He lamented the arbitrary controul that ministers had obtained by the prevention of remonstrances to the throne, and exclaimed in the language of the Roman historian :

O rara temporis felicitate! ubi sentire quæ velis, et quod sentire dicere liceat!

The Lord President justified the conduct of his majesty's ministers in commencing the war, and reminded the House of the extraordinary decree of the French convention of the 10th of November, in which they expressly declared, it was their intention to force other countries to adopt their principles and fraternize and affiliate with them, a decree that so justly gave offence to all Europe. He also instanced other proofs of provocation and aggression on the part of France. In answer to the assertion of the noble duke, that the French would not treat with the present ministers of this country, he referred to the treaty of Ryswick and to other negotiations, in which those who had conducted the war negotiated and made the peace.

Earl Fitzwilliam resisted the motion before the House, but contended that it was matter of charge against ministers the being disposed at all to treat with the present government of France. He declared he saw no difference between the present government and the former; they acted on the same principles, their objects are distinctly the same; they are still a nation of disorganizers; and if we were ever weak, like the king of Sardinia, we should be sure to be attacked by them in that

that moment. He asked the noble secretary of state if his majesty's ministers were prepared for the variety of important measures which must meet them in case of peace? Were they prepared to admit Frenchmen into this country and to suffer Englishmen to emigrate to France? Were they fortified against the influence of French anarchy, and the danger of the introduction of their pernicious principles? There were also other considerations---would peace now save Genoa? and prevent the plunder of Italy? *Bellum internecinem*, and nothing short of it, he had considered to be the policy of Europe with regard to the republic of France, which he ever deemed as the disturbers of every regular government and the enemies of mankind; on that ground only had he given ministers his support, and on that ground only would he continue it.

Lord Grenville began an able, animated, and perspicuous speech, with declaring that he regarded the motion of the noble earl in the light of a pamphlet, intended not to confine its operations to that House: it was meant for the public. And although the points on which it dwelt had been repeatedly discussed in that House, and consequent decisions come to, yet he never would decline the contest upon any of the grounds he had formerly occupied; as often as those topics were brought forward, so often would he meet them, and would to the last persist in the assertion, that the war was not declared by this country, but commenced necessarily in consequence of the unjust aggression of France. Who in fact are the parties that preclude negotiation at the present moment? Are they not the executive government of France, whose policy it was to remain at war, or they would never insist, as a preliminary to negotiation, that France should keep all *her* conquests, and receive back all she has lost to Great-Britain.

In the progress of the rupture between the two countries, he could lay his hand upon his heart, and as a man of honour and a gentleman declare, that if he ever doubted, whether any blame respecting the commencement of the war was imputable to ministers, it was upon the propriety of the forbearance of this country. If Louis XIV. had reigned and pursued the same measures, he should have said peace was impossible. Being therefore at war with France, it became a matter of policy not to have her whole force employed against us; we therefore engaged with our allies that they might attack them on the land side, while we carried on the war by sea. If, however, we had no allies, such was his confidence in the valour and resources of his country, that he trusted we should have prevailed.

It had been hinted that at the time when the Netherlands and Holland were safe, we might have concluded peace; it was not at the same time recollected, that that period was in the tyranny of Robespierre, and that France was little disposed to maintain the accustomed relations of peace and amity, at a time when it was her declared system, that to destroy the British constitution would prepare her triumph over every nation in Europe, and the dissemination of her principles throughout the world.

His lordship noticed the contradictory grounds on which his majesty's ministers were that day attacked. A noble earl (Fitzwilliam) had brought an accusation against them for doing so little. That noble earl was inclined to think our only safety was in a *bellum internecinum*; he however begged leave to disavow having ever entertained such a doctrine. He for one was of opinion, that the destruction of the republic would be the happiest event for either that country or this; but, notwithstanding, it was not an insurmountable impediment to peace, should the republic be established. (The system of democratic intrigue must be expected to run its course, it had done so, and the lesson, he trusted, would not be lost; we should dread the mischiefs of communication.

The noble earl speaks rather indefinitely, however, when he talks of the government of France; he unaccountably considers that government from the dethronement of the monarch to the present time as one government. Does he reflect that they never had a constitution until the present, of a fortnight's duration. That they had no sooner constituted a republic, than they superseded the constitution by a revolutionary government? In the administration of which faction rapidly succeeded faction, and this is the cause of the extreme difficulty to repose confidence in the present. The noble earl had talked of the danger of ingress and egress—did he think ministers knew so little of their duty or wanted power to forbid any foreigner, who carried on dangerous intrigues in this country, out of the kingdom? The best antidote to Frenchmen coming here, in his mind, would be allowing Englishmen to go over into France; the shocking view of the anarchy and disorganization there would absolve us from all contagion of their manners. While they were talking of peace, it became them to reflect upon the relative duties to those allies, who had so steadily adhered to the confederacy; it would ill become the dignity of his majesty, and the generous character of the country, to fall into the trap of separate negotiation, by

which policy the French have laboured to break and disunite for ever the interests of the powers of Europe.

With regard to the steps taken in consequence of his majesty's message, the objections made on that head were the most slight, insignificant, and were it not from respect to the noble earl, he should say contemptible, that were ever started. Mr. Wickham was not authorized to negotiate: Had there ever been an instance of a person thus authorised in the first instance? Were there lordships ignorant of the history of their own country? He did not mean that of remote, but of recent periods. He knew, as it was in the year 1763, that the usual mode of beginning negotiation was through the minister of some foreign and neutral power inclined to mediate and interpose. During the seven years war this mode was adopted both by England and France.

Another circumstance, his lordship observed, of a more extraordinary nature than even these to which he had alluded, was the declaration, that the present ministers could not make peace as well as other men. Gracious God! he exclaimed, was it necessary that you should be a traitor to your country in order to conciliate the good will of your enemy? that you should have favoured her designs, and not vigorously have opposed her arms, that you may be welcome to her in the hour of peace? If this were so, he trusted no one Englishman could be found in the country, who could negotiate for peace with the French republic. As to the parallel attempted to be drawn from America, of unsaying former expressions, and changing measures, it had been pressed farther than it would go. With respect to the answer of M. Barthelemy to Mr. Wickham's note, that answer his lordship remembered, was not only concluded in those haughty and arrogant terms that characterized the country from whence it proceeded, but it plainly discovered that the present orators of the republic retained the unreasonable and ambitious pretensions of their predecessors; conceiving the motion therefore to be exactly calculated to inspire the enemy, without being likely to produce any beneficial effects whatever, he should give his vote decidedly against it.

Earl Fitzwilliam and *Lord Grenville* explained.

The *Earl of Mansfield* spoke also in explanation. With respect to the charge that had been made upon ministers of their having intended nothing short of the re-establishment of the old French government, he disavowed the truth of that assertion; touching that point however, his lordship declared that in his opinion, the restoration of the ancient monarchy of France,

France, would not only have been a measure perfectly justifiable for this country, to have attempted, but a measure most calculated to promote the happiness of France and to preserve the peace and tranquillity of Europe. His lordship concluded with complimenting this country on the humanity with which they had treated the unfortunate emigrants who had sought its protection; and alluded in high terms of encomium to the circumstance of government having afforded an asylum to the princes of the House of Bourbon, and allowed them Holyrood House for their residence.

Lord Mulgrave with great neatness and precision of argument, recapitulated and discussed all the circumstances that had been stated in proof of the impossibility of making peace consistently with the interests of this country, or our faith towards our allies. His lordship said, however desirous of peace he felt in common with other noble lords, he considered peace as impossible while the Austrian Netherlands remained in the power of France, and when they were masters of the coast from the Bay of Biscay to Hamburg, and of the navigation of the Rhine.

The Marquis of Lansdown in allusion to the open manner in which the motion had been spoken to, began a speech of considerable length by saying, that "next to a warm friend give him an open enemy." He could not however but be surprised that any person should object to the motion in point of order. In the course of six and thirty years that he had had the honour to sit in that House, he had witnessed a variety of motions open to the same objections. Indeed soon after he had taken his seat, a noble duke, now no more, remarkable for his great ability as well as property, and distinguished for his strict adherence to the orders of the House, had made a very long motion (which he had himself the honour to second, and had never had occasion to regret the circumstance) against the German war, condemning in the most pointed terms, the very system pursued by an administration of which he himself was a member, and repeatedly sanctioned by parliament. No one objected to the propriety of his conduct; but all admired its integrity and manliness.

It would indeed be the height of absurdity that the House should be bound one year by the acts, much less by the resolutions, of a former one, particularly in time of war, where positions were perpetually changing, and where every year presented a new state of things. This was notoriously the case with the present war, though the object of it still continued an unaccountable mystery. It was clear indeed what could not

be the object of its continuance ; certainly no interest peculiarly British, since we were actually in possession of every thing, in the East or West, that British avidity could desire, St. Domingo perhaps alone excepted ; for he considered Gaudaloupe and St. Lucie as already in our hands ; without going into a particular discussion of what regarded the conquest of that island, it could never be supposed, that the whole of Europe, would see us with indifference, possessed of the monopoly of the sugar trade East and West ; so that not a lady in any country in Europe was to drink a dish of tea or coffee without the permission of the British minister. In fact therefore, the question was not, what we should acquire, but what we should, if left to ourselves, in point of good policy, desire to give up. He was far from denying the expression imputed to him by the president of the council at the time it was used ; namely, that *no indemnity was to be put in comparison with peace*, and if the money we had spent, since that opinion was given, was put into one scale, and all our conquests, including even the lovely Cape itself, with all its advantages, into the other, no sober minded man would hesitate a moment in deciding which was the heaviest. Putting British interests out of the question, what was there upon the continent to induce us to persevere ? The noble secretary of state had spoken much of the good faith of our allies, and of the punctual discharge of all the engagements we had made. It was a language that cost us at different times, many and many millions, for which we had experienced little or no return ; he was however far from saying, that national honour could be maintained too high ; but what security had we of reciprocity from our allies, or rather from our ally, for in fact we had only one ? Was it in the power, if it was the inclination, of the House of Austria to make us a due return ? Was it possible to continue the war to mutual advantage in the present posture of affairs ? It was a principle laid down by the King of Prussia, and pretty universally adopted and practised throughout all Germany, that alliances cannot be considered as binding beyond a certain point, where they tended essentially to injure the prosperity of the state. Austria had already lost Lombardy, the richest country in Europe, and the Low Countries, and she was in evident danger of losing the Milanese, a country in the next degree the richest in this part of the globe ; and for what ? for the loan which she had obtained from this country ; if it was to be considered, as ministers have always asserted, as nothing but a loan costing her, as it does, nearly seven per cent. besides other deductions, against which she had to set a compliance with our councils,

councils, in different movements of her army, contrary to the inclinations and interests of her generals; it could scarce be considered as a compensation. The restoration of the Low Countries could not be considered as such; indeed to say that the Netherlands would be restored to the Emperor, was an absurdity; they were gone for ever; even if they should not be united to France but be erected into an independent state, what benefit in that case, could the emperor derive from thence? The court of Vienna might indeed send money there, but never could expect to derive advantage from them, under any government to which the people of that country would now submit; on the contrary, they would probably draw resources from the Austrian dominions. In this situation, could the emperor answer to his subjects the continuance of the war, merely to satisfy the perverseness and obstinacy of Great-Britain, if any reasonable indemnity should be proposed? and every one knew what it was in the power of France, especially if aided by Prussia, to agree to. To what did all this lead, but to a partitioning system, which had already too much prevailed, and which if ever applied to Germany must end in destroying the liberties of Europe. A military consideration of the question if gone into, would only serve to shew, that perseverance in the present war was more likely to turn out to the disadvantage, than to the advantage of both Britain and Austria, if peace on reasonable terms could be obtained.

Another of the supposed motives for continuing the war had proved itself as ill founded, as either of those which had been mentioned; that is, the inability of France to support her credit. The assignats of which so much had been heard, were dead and buried; yet the republic had survived contrary to all that had been foretold. Besides, supposing them driven to still further distress, what other would be the consequence than that of driving them to compleat the bankruptcy, towards which they had already gone half way, added to which they had still in resource an agrarian system, a system which had been hitherto attributed to them without any foundation. Afterwards what would be the relative situation of the two countries? The price of labour in the one, free from any imposition, and in the other loaded with such a mass of taxes, as must ruin comparatively both trade and manufacture.

Another motive, had been to prevent the spreading of the new principles.—Examine the state of Europe and the contrary would be found to be the effect. With respect to the new principles, if there were a power that hovered over Europe for the purpose of disseminating them, it would have
set

set by the ears two great rival nations; and have contrived that those principles would be imbibed in the universities and places appointed for the instruction of the rising generation. If, however, by new principles were to be understood the investigation of the measures of government, the right of free discussion, the setting bounds to arbitrary power, securing the liberty of the press, examination into the expenditure of public monies, they would make their way, and even now their progress was rapid. The noisy part could do no harm and was quickly subsiding; but the real and substantial part of them was daily gaining ground in every country in Europe, Prussia perhaps only excepted. Ask any one, the marquis said, who had recently returned from the continent whether in Germany those principles were unknown or uncultivated; in fact they were no where more the objects of attention, if general report spoke true, than in the electorate of Hanover.

While they had been the subject of noisy and oftentimes empty declamation in England and in France, and the occasion, it must be allowed, of dreadful scenes of horror, owing it was to be hoped to peculiar circumstances in the latter, they had been making a slow and silent, but certain progress in the north of Europe, where they had become a matter of science, and a necessary part of education.

After examining the policy of putting an end to the war, the practicability of obtaining peace came next to be considered as well as the sincerity of the present ministers in the steps which they had taken to attain it. The Secretary of State had positively affirmed that hitherto we had no alternative before us, to prove which it was not necessary to do more than to recall to their memories a single name, that of Robespierre. He did not pretend to be well informed of the dispositions of the enemy; he cultivated no communications which tended to any information of the kind, as the ministry must very well know, who had the command of the post, and other opportunities of discovering it was otherwise. But from what he had formerly known, as well as from the general observation, he should have been led very strongly to suspect, that there must have been, both before the time of Robespierre, and since his death, openings, not probably in the way of *official question and answer* as stated by the public secretary, but in ways which might have led more certainly to so desirable an event, if they had been met with a corresponding inclination upon our part. The noble secretary affirmed that such inclination on our part was incontrovertibly manifested by the note addressed to Mr.

Wickham,

Wickham, to Monsieur Barthelemi, at Basle, and further asserted, that no negociation had ever been commenced except in some such manner and quoted for examples two negociations which had commenced in the course of the seven years war, during the administration of Lord Chatham.

The answer to this was very short; which was, that both of them had failed, he was in a situation to speak very correctly as to the negociation which had afterwards succeeded, and had ended in the peace of 1763, as well as to that which preceded the peace of 1782, as he was intimately acquainted both with the one and the other; and as both were now become matters of history, he had no scruple in shewing, that so far from resembling the communication made by Mr. Wickham, they had been as essentially different as it was well possible for them to be.

As to the peace of 1763, the first circumstance, which, however, was no trifling one, was that the minister who had conducted the war, and was one of the principal advocates in support of it, had retired; the next point of difference was, that the minister who succeeded him, adopted in that House and probably elsewhere, a language evidently tending to conciliation, and condemning in very pointed terms, the general policy of the war and mode of conducting it. In the third place an opportunity was taken to release Comte D'Estaing, who, as every one remembers, was then a prisoner under very peculiar circumstances, and who was permitted to return to France accompanied with such marks of attention and regard as could not be misunderstood. Last of all the negociation was put into the hands of a mediating court, which was, at least up to the time, more remarkable than any in Europe, for the judicious choice of its ministers; and the one resident here, who was more intimately connected and acquainted than perhaps any foreigner was before or had been since; was entrusted with the principal conduct of the negociation, which, as might reasonably be expected, ended in peace. He was still more enabled to speak respecting the peace of 1782, as the overture was made directly to himself (in consequence of some very general conversation with a French admiral, who likewise had been a prisoner in England, and returned in the usual course of exchange according to the terms of the cartel) by the Comte de Vergennes, then minister of France, whose name he was always bound to mention with honour and respect, as well as the gentleman employed by him, Monsieur de Rayneval, the confidential secretary of the department, who having been known to be upon such intimate terms of friendship with the minister,

minister, as to be present at every conversation he had with the foreign ministers in his department, therefore carried with him the most unequivocal marks of intimate confidence; and he must do justice both to the one and the other, that it was impossible from the first moment, to the last of the negotiation, to proceed with more honour, fairness, and manliness, than they did. M. Rayneval certainly did not, at setting out, tell the terms to which he finally agreed, but he communicated enough of the situation and disposition of his court in regard to the general affairs of Europe, to put their sincerity out of all question, and stated himself, as both empowered and ready, to enter into the discussion of every circumstance that was depending. It was painful to him to give any decided opinion as to the sincerity of ministers in their late communication; there could be no greater reproach in public or in private life than that of insincerity, and he did not wonder at ministers feeling sore at being suspected of so base a quality. At the same time every man owed it the cause of truth, and of his country, to declare the impression it made upon them; and he must say, that, putting himself in the place of the French, he would have formed the same judgment they appeared to have done; which once admitted, sufficiently accounted for their answer, which manifestly appeared for a variety of reasons a political one, very ably calculated to secure the obedience and affections of the Low Countries, till their fate could be finally determined; and therefore not to be regarded as declaratory of their real disposition.

That there did indeed occur to him one way of proving indisputably the sincerity or insincerity of ministers, if they would be as open in regard to the negotiation which had passed through their hands, as he had just been with regard to those in which he had been concerned; and they were now on all sides equally become matters of history; ministers had, as all their lordships knew, been concerned and succeeded in a negotiation where the parties were still if possible more hostile than even France and England at this time, and more difficult, because in one instance the French government had been changed; in the other, the parties between whom such violent personality had subsisted, were still identically the same. Their lordships must readily perceive that he alluded to the coalition which had lately taken place between a noble duke and his friends and the ministry; the union being now compleat, there could be no harm in discovering the forms (for nothing more was desired) which were made use of to bring about such an happy event. What sort of a negotiation, he did not mean

to ask unfair or impertinent questions, was carried on when a noble secretary of state joined ministry and lent his support to their prosecution of the present war? Would the noble secretary of state declare whether the negociation was commenced by four or five formal, dry, and haughty propositions from the minister, would the noble duke upon his part declare whether he refused to receive them except at the Whig-club, where he would be found to be one, if not the centre column of the revolution, surrounded by its best friends, and did he consult his allies upon the nature of the propositions, and upon the answer he should make for the good of the common cause? In short did the noble duke at the head of the Whig-club, say "propose your terms to my allies, and I may listen to them. Alone, I cannot hear of overtures." If this was the manner in which things passed, he should not have the smallest doubt about acknowledging the sincerity of ministers, in the overture made by Mr. W. if on the other hand, some unctious person had been found to open a communication and had been instructed to urge the respect which each party entertained at bottom for the other; to entreat them to forget all hasty expressions, to sacrifice forms and punctilio to the public good, with which places and emoluments could never be suspected to interfere; and the coalition had been accomplished in consequence of some such negociation, he was sorry to be obliged to decide on the side of the insincerity of the step which had been taken at Basle. Upon the whole he did not pretend to enter into a discussion of every part of the motion by the noble earl; great injustice had been done to it in that respect, that of regarding it as a motion for the removal of his majesty's ministers, since it was expressly confined to a change of measures and that a change of ministers was not so much as mentioned in any part of it. It was, however, the marquis declared, sufficient for him, that it went to the great point of peace; as to any other parts of it, any noble lord who disapproved them was at liberty to move for their omission, to which for his part he should make no objection; but that he always had since the commencement of the war, and always should remain till the conclusion of it, an advocate to the utmost extent of his power for any proposition, coming from any quarter, much more from so respectable as that of the noble earl, conducive to the great end of peace.

Lord Mulgrave with great neatness and precision of argument recapitulated and discussed all the circumstances that had been stated in proof of the impossibility of making peace consistently with the interests of this country, or our faith to-

wards our allies. His lordship said, however desirous of peace, he felt in common with other noble lords, he considered peace as impossible while the Austrian Netherlands remained in the power of France, and when the French were masters of the coast from the Bay of Biscay to Hamburgh, and of the navigation of the Rhine.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* observed, that it had been repeatedly declared by ministers that the present war was undertaken in order to effectuate two objects; namely, to support our allies and to preserve the constitution. With what success, he would ask, had their endeavours for such purposes been attended? In respect to our allies, had they been benefited by the interference of this country? In fact, what had we done for them? Had Holland any reason to thank us for the protection we afforded her? Had we been able to preserve the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt? Had Austria cause to exult in the connection? Let their lordships look to the situation of the king of Sardinia. Was that monarch in a better state than that in which we found him at the commencement of our ruinous hostilities with the French republic? At that period, it was true, he had sustained the loss of Savoy; but he had been deprived of no other portion of his dominions; different, indeed, was his present condition!—Such had been the benefits, such the blessings, which ministers had continued to bestow upon our Allies!

With respect to the other object for which the war had been undertaken, how stood that question? It had been said, that the war had checked the promulgation of principles dangerous to the constitution and prevented the operations of those who were hostile to it. Notwithstanding this assertion, however, since its commencement, innovations had most undoubtedly been made upon the constitution, and such innovations as before that period, no man in his senses could have dreamed of.

On the subject of the late message from Mr. Wickham, and M. Barthelemi's answer, his lordship observed that the message in question had been of a nature too equivocal and disrespectful not to create strong suspicions in the minds of every one who regarded the transaction, of the sincerity of ministers on the occasion. It had been said, by a noble lord in administration, that the republic still evinced an enmity to kings and monarchical governments, by the omission they had made in their address to the ambassador of Spain, to mention his master; if, however, ministers were desirous of drawing a conclusion of that sort, in how much greater a degree would it apply to themselves, inasmuch as in the late pretended nego-

ciation,

ciation, they had studiously avoided to recognize the republic, or even to mention its name? For his part, he believed ministers never to have been serious in a desire to negotiate. But if they were sincere, the ignorance and imbecility they had displayed in their manner of conducting the business, rendered them so obviously unfit for the situations they held, so grossly incapable of doing the duties of their office, that he would venture to select, from the corner of the first street he came to, men who would constitute as able a cabinet, as was formed by those, at present, at the head of affairs.

Lord Lauderdale adverted to the conduct of ministers towards Admiral Cornwallis. He expressed his sorrow and indignation at the treatment which that gallant admiral had recently experienced from the first Lord of the Admiralty, in having been brought to a court martial on a charge of his not having obeyed certain orders contained in a letter from the noble lord in question. That court martial he regarded as capriciously and unnecessarily held, and the acquittal of the admiral as a disgrace to the board of admiralty. The circumstance of the admiral's flag being at present struck, he considered a disgrace to the country and a discouragement to the gallant officers of the British navy; he hoped however, soon to see it hoisted again, with all the honours due to that brave and experienced officer.

His lordship then returned to the subject more immediately before the house. With respect to the disposition of ministers to negotiate with the French republic, he repeated his disbelief of their sincerity, and ridiculed, in pointed terms, the idea of their having quietly abandoned their old ground of objection to negotiate on the score of the rapid succession of rulers in that country and the instability of its government, and having expressed a desire to treat with a government of the duration of *five months*! The French had been accused of acting in a dictatorial and a tyrannous manner towards neutral and independant states; if, (which however he would by no means admit to be the case) that accusation were founded in fact, our correspondence with Tuscany and other neutral nations had been such as might have been expected to have proceeded from the French republic.

The president of the council had concluded his speech, with an eulogium on the humanity that the country had displayed in affording an asylum to the emigrants of the former government of France, and, he might have added, of the French republic, and his lordship had particularly alluded to the present resistance of some of the princes of the house of Bourbon. In his

mind, however, little compliment could be paid to the country on its humanity in that instance; the residence of those princes having been generally considered as preferable only to a gaol. Here his lordship noticed the cases of the unfortunate M. Lameth and M. La Fayette. He reprobated the disgraceful apathy with which ministers had regarded all application to meliorate those martyrs to the cause of genuine freedom and well regulated government; and expressed some degree of indignation, at the inhospitable treatment which the former of those gentlemen had recently experienced in being peremptorily ordered to quit the kingdom, which he had visited not merely to screen persecution, but to restore to health a frame shattered by a long and unjustifiable confinement in the loathsome dungeons of a prison.

The motion which had been made by his noble friend, his lordship observed, had been objected to on the ground of its too great length; for the length of the motion, however ministers might thank themselves. The motion was a long and a black catalogue of their errors and absurdities, and the matters to which it pointed were too important in their nature to be abridged, and too numerous to be comprised in a few words. For the reasons therefore which he had submitted to their lordships, he should certainly give it his vote.

The *Lord Chancellor* observed, that the motion must have been drawn up with the idea and expectation that no grave assembly could possibly entertain it. It had been justly remarked by a noble lord who spoke early in the debate, that it amounted in fact to an address for the dismissal of his majesty's ministers. The motion stated those ministers to be incapable and incorrigibly obstinate; it, however, nevertheless recommended it to his majesty to direct such obstinate and incorrigible men to adopt a line of conduct *different* from that which they had hitherto pursued, in order *speedily* to obtain a peace honourable to the country, (and of course therefore such as every man desired) but which it considered as being at a *great distance*! A more palpable, a more paradoxical absurdity than this could not be. If ministers were those incorrigibly obstinate men, that they were described to be, the motion was obviously ridiculous; no recommendation of an alteration of measures could possibly be listened to by men of such dispositions. It would, therefore, have answered the object of the party perhaps more effectually, and certainly have been more consistent with common sense, to have petitioned his majesty to change such incapable and incorrigibly obstinate ministers.

With regard to the war in which the country was engaged,
in

in spite of the obstinacy and incapacity of his majesty's ministers, it had not been quite so unsuccessful as to the main objects of advantage to us, as it had been stated. If our operations elsewhere had not entirely answered the hopes and wishes of the nation, at sea we had reaped benefits that amply compensated for any other deficiencies of success. We had taken from the French all their possessions of a colonial nature that it was in our power to attack; their navy had been effectually crippled by us; and it was agreed on by all parties that the resources of the country were far from being exhausted; in proof of the truth of that fact indeed, money had been borrowed by those incapable and obstinate ministers on terms lower and more advantageous than at any former period. His lordship made some remarks upon what fell from the Marquis of Lansdown respecting our allies, which he seemed to consider as indicative of less regard to fidelity in engagements with them, than was justifiable or even politic.

The obstinacy of ministers in managing matters so well, was such that his surprise at the desire manifested by a noble Marquis of a change of men was not very great. One circumstance however, he confessed did create in his mind no small degree of astonishment; he was he owned considerably surprised to find a charge made against ministers of taxing the rich, and that too, on the curious ground, that taxing the rich was delusive and a mere evasion, for that it was in fact, taxing the poor, who in the end paid every tax that was imposed. With respect to the noble marquis's observations on the subject of taxation, he would not go into a discussion of them that night. He could not however but remark, that the *theorem* which the noble marquis had lain down in the course of his speech that evening, was a *theorem* to which it was impossible for him to subscribe. The subject of political economy, his lordship said, was one to which he had paid some degree of attention, and on which he had perused the works of a variety of writers. Of those writers there were men of the most astute knowledge and confessed authority, who so far from agreeing with the noble marquis in his proposition that it was bad policy to impose taxes which appeared immediately to fall upon the rich, but were ultimately paid by the people, that they held quite a different doctrine. The idea in fact, was merely a theory of the French *economistes*; plausible indeed, but unsound, and unsupported by the opinions of those writers on finance, who were generally regarded as the highest authority on the subject, and to whose sentiments he had been accustomed to pay the greatest deference and respect.

The

The noble marquis, his lordship observed, had in a fanciful manner said, that if a demon or evil spirit had lain a plan to extend the influence of French principles, it would have been by exciting other nations to engage in hostilities with that country. Had the noble marquis, however, been the minister of that spirit, had he been in the confidence of that demon and accustomed to suggest its operations and obey its will, he would probably have considered seditious clubs and corresponding societies to be a better means of effecting the end in view.

His lordship concluded with observing, that ministers had from time to time stated to the House their conduct and measures, and had repeatedly had the honour to receive the judgment of the House in favour of that conduct and of those measures. The motion however went to condemn that very conduct and those very measures to the propriety of which the House had so often assented. Were their lordships therefore to adopt it, they would act in a most curious manner, they would in effect, rescind their own resolutions and pass a vote of censure on themselves.

The *Marquis of Lansdown* in reply to the remarks which the Lord Chancellor had made upon what had fallen from him, said that he did not rise with an intention to follow the noble lord on the woolpack through his long, ingenious, and very entertaining speech. It was natural for a man, who endeavoured to notice the different observations of a variety of persons, to obtain at last no very distinct conception of his own ideas: thus it was, that the noble and learned lord had made a free translation of the remarks of those, who had offered their sentiments to the House in the course of the evening, and in some instances, had attributed to one person, that which had been uttered by another.

With respect to the allusion that had been made by a noble earl, to a late court martial, he had listened to the handsome terms in which that noble earl had mentioned the admiral who had been the object of it, with infinite pleasure; he had however felt also, a considerable share of pain. He regretted that any allusion had been made to that event, because, independent of the aversion that he had ever entertained to any interference between official authority, and the case of an individual, he had hoped, that on the subject of the late trial, a perfect silence would have been preserved, as in that case, administration would have had time to pause, and their lordships and the country might have seen the flag of that brave admiral again flying. The marquis took occasion to bestow on the character of Admiral Cornwallis, the warmest eulogiums.

giums. The skill and courage of the admiral, his lordship observed, had been repeatedly proved and long since established, and he was confessedly regarded by every country in Europe, as one of the ablest seamen in the known world. A man of his tried talents and great nautical knowledge, was a property which his country could not too highly estimate, and he trusted that, ere long, the advantage of his services would be felt and enjoyed by the nation, to which he did so much honour.

On the subject of fidelity to allies, his lordship repeated it, that though, undoubtedly, a certain degree of honour was to be observed, in respect to our connection with them, a country nevertheless was justified in occasionally looking to her own situation, and was not bound to sacrifice itself to engagements with any allies whatever. His lordship ended with declaring that he should respect and honour those ministers, whoever they might happen to be, who seriously sought the means of negotiation and restored to their country the blessings of peace.

Earl Spencer rose in order to exculpate himself and the board of admiralty from the censure with which their conduct had been treated. The noble earl he was persuaded was not aware of the dangerous extent to which his observation might be carried, when he said that the acquittal of admiral Cornwallis was a disgrace to the board of admiralty; were every acquittal in that predicament, it would necessarily become the interest of the admiralty never to prosecute, but in cases where their influence would command a verdict unfavourable to the object whose conduct was under examination. In the prosecution of Admiral Cornwallis, his lordship declared, that he was actuated solely by considerations of public duty; every private feeling was repugnant to any measure which might possibly affect the character of an officer whose merit he was ready to acknowledge.

In answer to the charge which had been made on the board, of ignorance of the motions of the enemy, and supineness since the first of June 1794, he observed that, respecting the destination of the Dutch fleet, newspaper authority was not to be relied on, for though the public prints might be ignorant of their destination, it did not necessarily follow that the admiralty were so likewise; and as to the apparent supineness of the board, naval victories had been more rare since he had come into office, not because naval affairs were worse conducted, but because, previous to that period the French had been so completely crippled, that they had hitherto been in a great de-
gree

gree either incapable of contending with our fleet, or desirous of avoiding it.

Lord Grenville in reply to some remarks of *Lord Lauderdale*, said, a construction had been put by a noble earl, on what had fallen from a noble friend of his (*Lord Hawkesbury*) who had spoken early the debate, which was by no means warranted by the observations of his noble friend. Had his noble friend, in his mention of the correspondence of *M. Barthelemi* and *Mr. Wickham*, made the remark which the noble earl had attributed to him, or in any degree detracted from the merit of *Mr. Wickham*, however unpleasant it would have been to have differed from his noble friend, he should certainly have felt himself under the necessity of so doing, in that instance. With respect to *Mr. Wickham*, he desired to bear testimony to the great talents and acuteness of that gentleman. It had been his good fortune to have recommended him to the more immediate notice of government, and he conceived that he had thereby done his country a valuable piece of service. A more zealous, attentive, and able servant, his majesty had not in his employ, nor could the country boast of. However high in character *M. Barthelemi* might stand, as a subtle and an experienced negociator, his lordship declared, that he would not scruple to affirm, that *Mr. Wickham* was not in any way his inferior. To the merits of that gentleman indeed, he felt it impossible to do justice, but he also felt it necessary to apprise the House of the very little ground that existed, to warrant the conclusion of the noble earl.

His lordship touched upon some other points that had been made the subjects of remark, and with respect to the discussion of political matters in disputing societies, observed, that schools of debate might, indeed, be used to very laudable and beneficial purposes, but that they were also capable of being perverted to purposes of the most dangerous nature, and reprehensible tendency.

The *Duke of Bedford* rose amidst a very general call for the question, and in a speech of considerable length, blamed ministers for not having been sufficiently explicit and open; he thought it was not evident, from the negotiation at *Basse*, that ministers wished for peace, nor that the French directory wished for a continuation of hostilities. With respect to our rupture with France, he never had approved of the conduct of government on the occasion; the republic, he was ready to acknowledge had began hostilities, but instead of trying to avert war, ministers had courted it by the haughty conduct they had observed. Ministers had talked at various periods

periods in a very high tone, of the impossibility and the disgrace of treating with regicides; they had however either deceived that House, or they had actually proposed treating with those very regicides.

His grace alluded in strong terms, to the unhappy affair at Quiberon; he declared it to be his opinion, that with respect to the emigrants, this country should not have interfered at all about them; but having so done, they were bound to protect and assist, not harass and destroy them. Was it therefore, he would ask, a circumstance for which those unfortunate people had much reason to thank ministers in having sacrificed them at Quiberon, in an expedition of the most obvious issue?

The duke concluded with observing, that if the French republic, fighting against a combination of despots, became so elated by the success of her arms, that hurried on by an overweening ambition, she should dare to dictate to other countries and attempt to interfere in their affairs in order to diminish their independence, it would not be by the feeble support of their lordships' votes in that House in favour of every measure of ministers, that the constitution and the liberties of their country would be preserved. Should those proud republicans, intoxicated by their victories, endeavour not to enslave the people of this country, for to slavery he was persuaded they never would submit, but even to dictate to them and controul their actions, he hoped and trusted, that there existed not a man in the country who would not with eagerness and avidity, at the risk not merely of his property, but at the hazard of his life, oppose the progress of their arms and crush their tyranny and presumption. For himself, were the evil to come to that pass, rather than submit to their power, he would die in the last ditch.

Lord Hawkebury said a few words in a low voice, when the question was put.

<i>Contents</i>	—	—	7
<i>Proxies</i>	—	—	3—10
<i>Non-contents</i>	—	—	77
<i>Proxies</i>	—	—	33—110
<i>Majority</i>			100

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, May 10.

Marquis of Hertford's estate, Duke of Newcastle's estate,
VOL. IV. 1796. 30 Whitby

Whitby Harbour, National Debt, Lottery, and Lime Bills, were read a third time and passed.

The House, in a committee, went through the Bill for granting costs in persecutions for misdemeanors. The report was received, and the Bill read a third time and passed.

WINE DUTY BILL.

The order of the day for the third reading of the Wine Duty Bill being read,

Mr. *Sheridan* said, he had not altered his opinion as to the principle of the Bill; he was averse to taking the stock in hand, but as to what he had advanced respecting the taking the stock of private persons, upon mature deliberation, he had adopted a different opinion, he thought it would be attended with great difficulty, by making servants a sort of spies upon their masters. He proposed that all wine imported to the end of July should be considered as stock, and the additional duty paid by instalments.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed to the proposition, and hoped the honourable gentleman was prepared with a rider; but if he were not, he would take the trouble off his hands, and defer the third reading till to-morrow.

Mr. *Sheridan* allowed that he was taken by surprise, in finding his resolution adopted, as nothing was more unusual, and he said he was not prepared.

Mr. *Grey* mentioned what he had before stated, concerning the collection of the additional duties by the excise officers, without an order from the treasury, with the additional instance of duties upon some wine belonging to Mr. Hayward, of Fenchurch-street, hoping it would be inquired into.

Mr. *Francis* wished the tax to be laid on bottles; he argued that it would operate better for the revenue, as well as the public, who would have better measure.

Ordered to be read a third time next day.

QUAKERS' BILL.

The order of the day being read for the House to resolve itself in a committee,

Mr. *Francis* objected to the Bill on account of the Quakers, who were willing to obey the laws from which the Bills went to relieve them, being prevented from so doing by the penalties imposed by their internal regulations, which with respect to the paying of tythes, consisted of excommunication.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* replied, and a conversation between several members took place, which was interrupted by

The Speaker, who observed that as there was notice of a motion before the House, it should precede any other discussion. He thought

thought the Bill was to have gone through the committee without any further observations.

In consequence of the Speaker's intimation, the consideration of the Bill was postponed till next day.

MOTION FOR A CHANGE OF SYSTEM.

Mr. Fox addressed the House to the following effect.—“ It having fallen to my lot, Mr. Speaker, both at the commencement, and in the course of the war, to trouble the House with several motions which have not been honoured with their concurrence, and having last session proposed an inquiry into the state of the nation, to which the House of Commons did not think proper to assent, it may be thought by some, perhaps, to be rather presumptuous in me, again to call their attention to the same subject; and I confess that if there had not some events happened during the last year, rather singular in their nature, I should have acquiesced in the former decisions of the House, after having entered my solemn protest against the plans that were adopted, and avowed my strong and complete disapprobation of the whole system of measures that has been pursued. There certainly, however, have happened, during the last year, some events, which must, in no inconsiderable degree, have tended to alter the sentiments of those with whom I had the misfortune to differ, as well as to strengthen and confirm the former opinions of those with whom I have the honour to agree. The event of greatest importance, and to which I particularly allude, is the negotiation at Basle, and the communications which ministers have made of it to the ambassadors of foreign courts resident here. As I shall have occasion to comment upon this transaction more fully afterwards, I shall only say at present, that notwithstanding all the applauses that have been bestowed upon it, the result cannot fail to draw the attention of every thinking man to the present posture of public affairs; it must call the attention of every man who is not determined to act blindly (a description of people of which I hope there are none in this House) to the the situation of the country, and that line of conduct which government ought to follow. Whether ministers have acted wisely or not, (no matter which for our present purpose) we have learned this fact, that we have no immediate prospect of peace. It signifies not whether it may have arisen from the unreasonable demands of the enemy, or the mismanagement of his majesty's ministers, but of this we are ascertained, that we have no prospect of peace (an event much to be lamented, but more especially in the present circumstances of the country); and that it is not in the power of those

those who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs to obtain terms from the enemy, which they can dare to offer to the nation. Whatever may be our opinions upon the causes which have led to this situation, we must all be agreed upon the effect; and none I presume, will dispute that our situation is worse than when, whether by conquest or concession, we had a prospect of a near-approaching peace.

“ Having stated this point, upon which there can be no difference of opinion, I shall go into a detail of those circumstances, which, in my mind, have reduced us to the situation in which we are now placed. I know the language which has been held by the executive government on former occasions of a similar nature, and the language which may be used by the executive government on the present, (because it is its interest to use it,) viz. that it is not our business to inquire into the causes of the evil, but to discover and apply the best mode of remedy. This has always been their artful address both to the parliament and to the people; but in my mind it is a most sinister and ineffectual mode of reasoning; so long as experience is the best guide to man in all his affairs, so long shall I continue of opinion that the true mode of getting out of any difficulty in which we are involved, is by reviewing the causes, the errors, or the accidents by which we were involved in it, and from these forming our plans for our deliverance. The corollary of this proposition is, that we ought to retrace the steps we have taken in the present war, to examine the foundations of our conduct, and to see whether much of its fatality, is not to be ascribed to our own system. If the house will make this examination with impartiality, not with minds warped by prejudice, they will not fail to discharge a most important duty to their country, and they will be warranted by the experience of all past times in pursuing this course. I shall, therefore, rather look retrospectively than prospectively, and in my retrospective view I shall not go farther back than the American war. Most members in the House will recollect the calamities and misfortunes which beset us in that contest, and also the terms of peace which in the end we were constrained to make; terms which I shall not argue at present, whether it was or was not for the advantage of the country to accept, in the circumstances in which it was then placed. Many will also recollect the discussions which took place in the course of the war, and the constant argument which on all occasions was pressed from the ministerial side of the House, that we ought not to look retrospectively, but prospectively; that when the House was on fire, the question was, not how the
fire

fire was kindled, but how it could be soonest and most effectually extinguished. The argument which we opposed to that was one founded upon solid principles, and one which the House listened to at last; that a consideration of past errors would lead to future amendment; and that a change of measures might lead to a change of circumstances; and I appeal to fact, if the truth of this argument was not confirmed by experience. As long as we declined going into a retrospective inquiry, the war lasted, and misfortune followed misfortune; from the moment that the House adopted a resolution to inquire into its past errors, measures were put into a train by which peace was happily obtained, and the national prosperity restored.

“Before we go into particular inquiries, let us examine whether erroneous maxims of policy have been adopted, and whether the principles which have been acted upon are not fundamentally wrong. An argument has been used by an ancient orator, the greatest orator that perhaps the world ever saw, which, in my opinion, is not inapplicable to the present situation of this country. Demosthenes uses this brilliant, and in my opinion, no less solid than brilliant argument, in the introduction to one his noblest orations. When speaking of the conduct and fate of the Athenians, he compared their calamities with the mismanagement of their rulers, and contended that this mismanagement, so far from being a cause of despair, was a ground of hope; if, said he, they had fallen into these misfortunes, by the course of natural and irremediable causes, then indeed there would be reason for despair; if, on the contrary, they are the fruits of folly and misconduct, it may be possible, by wisdom and prudence, to repair the evil. In the same manner I would argue on the present occasion. Had we not fallen into our present situation from plans ill-formed and worse executed? If every minister had been wise, and every general brave, then, indeed, our state would have been truly deplorable.—But if our policy has been erroneous, and our measures ill-conducted, we may still entertain some hope, because our errors may be corrected, and the losses from our misconduct retrieved. I have often had occasion to urge this argument, and I know it has been said in reply, that the argument is good when carried to an extreme; but that the natural imperfection common to every man renders it inconclusive in any other case. When, however, the misconduct was of such a nature, as to be capable of being remedied, when the mismanagement was such as ought to be avoided, it shewed that the argument was true in a degree, as well as true in
the

the extreme. This I state as a motive against despair; and I contend, that upon the face of the things, when we compare the situation to which we are now reduced, with that which we held four years ago, there is ground for presumption, that the change in a great measure has been owing to errors in the conduct of those who have had the management of public affairs. In a survey of the past, the period to which we are naturally apt to recur, is the period of the commencement of the war. If we could consider in one debate, every particular of the external and internal situation of the country, and more especially the means which have been employed for the preservation of its constitution, we might go farther back: but this would involve a detail too extensive for the discussion of a single night, a field too large for the capacity of any individual speaker.

"I shall confine myself then to the examination of the war from its origin to the present day, and I shall begin with the opening of the budget in 1792, when a most brilliant display of the situation of the country was given by the minister, without alluding to any prior or subsequent statement. I take that day because it was a day on which his statement was more to his own satisfaction, and more to the satisfaction of the House than at any other period. In the year 1792, then three years after the French revolution, the minister came forward with his boasted and triumphant description of the state of the country, of the prosperity of our commerce, of the improvement of our manufactures, of the vastness of our revenue, and the prospect of permanent peace. He then admitted that fifteen years peace was perhaps *rather* too much to expect, but he said that we had as rational hopes of the continuance of tranquillity as ever had existed in the history of modern times. Then full two years and a half (I wish to speak within compass) after the first revolution in France, after the National Assembly had compelled the King to come to Paris, which was said to be his gaol, after the National Assembly had annihilated the titles, and destroyed the feudal tenures of the nobility; after the National Assembly had confiscated the lands belonging to the church, banished part of the clergy, and compelled those who remained to take an oath contrary, in many instances, to the dictates of their conscience: then, I say, this prospect of fifteen years peace was held out to the country. It was after that the King of France had been made, as was said at the time, to stand in a splendid pillory, and even two years after the flight of that unfortunate monarch, that this expectation of lasting tranquillity was raised. So that I am

entitled

entitled to conclude, that in the opinion of the King's ministers, the annihilation of the titles of the nobility, and the degradation of the order, the exile of the clergy, and the confiscation of the lands of the church; that the invasion of the royal prerogative, and the insults offered to the sovereign, described as they then were by their friends, by pillory and imprisonment, (terms which I now repeat, not with any view of courting the argument, or the favour, of those who employed them, but merely to shew the lights in which these events were considered at the time) not only so little interfered with the system of neutrality which they had adopted, but were so little connected with the interests of the country, as not to damp the prospect of peace, or even to render the duration of tranquillity for fifteen years very uncertain. I so far agree, therefore, with the opinion of ministers, that instead of the country being in danger from the French revolution, there were no circumstances attending it, which rendered the continuance of peace more uncertain than it was before it happened. It may be said, that if we attend to dates, we shall find that at that time France was professing pacific views abroad. I have so often seen these professions made by the most ambitious powers, in the very moment when they were thirsting most for aggrandizement, that I have little faith to repose in them, so little, indeed, that I cannot believe that the pacific views of ministers were founded upon these professions which were made by the French; but at that very time France was either engaged in actual hostilities with Austria, or on the point of commencing hostilities. War was either begun, or there was a moral certainty that it would take place.

"Without stopping to discuss a point (on which, however, I have no difficulty in my own mind) whether Austria or France was the aggressor, it was sufficient that ministers knew at the time, that an aggression had been made on the part of one of those powers. And notwithstanding the defeats which attended the French arms at the outset, it was the general opinion that the Austrian territory was defenceless, and that it would soon be over-run by the enemy's army. Even then a fifteen years peace was talked of. I must here state a fact, which certainly is not officially confirmed, but which rests upon the general belief of Europe, that before hostilities commenced between Austria and France, an insinuation, or rather a communication, was made by England to the latter power, that if they made any aggression upon the territories of Holland, which at that time was our ally, we should be obliged to break the neutrality that we had observed, and interfere in the contest. This message has been differently interpreted. Some have

have put upon it the interpretation, which I think, upon the whole, is the fair one, that it was our policy to take all prudent means of avoiding any part in the war. Others, I know, have put upon it a more invidious construction, and insinuated that our meaning was neither more nor less than this, speaking to the French, "Do what you will with the Austrian Netherlands, provided you do not touch our ally, that is the limit which we fix for our neutrality." I state this to shew that at that time ministers did not foresee any probable event which might occasion a rupture between this country and France. That this also was the general opinion of the House in spring, 1792, I need not spend time in convincing them. I shall, however, barely mention a circumstance of a financial nature, which happened near the close of the session, and which proves the fact beyond dispute. I mean the measure of funding the 4 *per cents*.

"At that time the three *per cents*. consols had risen to 95, 96, and even 97, and it was the opinion of the right honourable gentleman, I will not say with what judgment, that they would rise to par; with this conviction, with a view of a probable saving, he had lost the opportunity of a certain saving of 240,000*l*. a thing of such magnitude as to prove to the House that at that time the right honourable gentleman had no expectation that the peace was likely to be disturbed, since it induced him to forego the great good that was in his power, in the hope of the small and trifling addition that might have accrued on the event of the three *per cents*. rising to par. I mention this as a fact subsidiary to the declaration which the minister made at the commencement of that session, and which proved that, to the end of it, he continued to entertain the same confidence of peace. Thus ended the session 1792. In the course of the summer vacation of that year, events happened in France of a very remarkable nature: the 10th of August put an end to the monarchy of the country, and substituted a republic in its stead. I do not mean to detain the House by any comments on that disgraceful event. That it was an act of monstrous injustice all men are agreed; but I am now speaking as an English legislator, and in that character I must say that it was an event with which England had nothing to do. The words monarchy and republic are words well calculated to assemble men under standards; to inflame their zeal, to arouse their passions, and to deluge countries with blood. They have done so in all ages, and in all countries; but in the present discussion we certainly have nothing to do with the event. It belonged to France, and to France only.

only. What happened on the 10th of August made not the slightest difference in the relation between France and England. All the great events that could be supposed to have influence by example upon the constitution of England had happened before this event. The nobility had been destroyed, the clergy erased, equality established, and those which we call Jacobin principles were in full force prior to this event: unless then it is meant to say that there is something so sacred in the very name of king, as even to contain a charm, when the authority is extinct, sufficient to counterbalance all the effects of this Jacobinism, it cannot be said that the 10th of August made such an alteration as to strike terror to England. I appeal to those who are the most attached to monarchy, if they think that such a monarchy could have sufficient influence over the Jacobin principles, as to take from them all their virulence, and neutralize their poison? I contend, that if the principles established before the revolution of the 10th of August were calculated to give our ministers confidence in the continuance of tranquility, the change of that day could not destroy such confidence. The destruction of the monarchy of France! Can gentlemen forbear to look back to what has been the conduct of the monarchy? It is not in my nature to treat with severity the memory of the unfortunate, but, as an Englishman, can I forget not merely the prejudices of my country, but its history? No man who thinks that the former wars of this country against France were just and necessary, can refuse to say that they were provoked by the restless ambition and the insidious intrigues of the House of Bourbon. I cannot forget that our public debt and our national burdens have all been incurred by the incessant system of the monarchy of France. Can it then be said, that the overthrow of that monarchy was either a cause of alarm or a symptom of danger to Great Britain?

"Before however, I quit this part of the subject and lest I should be thought by some to approve more of the conduct of ministers than I really do, I find it necessary to say a few words in explanation. I approve of their sentiments expressed in 1792, in as far as they thought that the French revolution did not afford a sufficient cause for this country involving itself in a war, and I approve of their conduct, in as far as it went upon a determination to abide by an invariable line of neutrality if universal tranquility could not be preserved. I differ, however, with them upon the means of preserving this neutrality. I think there was a time before the war broke out with Austria, which presented an opportunity for this country to exercise the

great and dignified office of a mediator, which would not only have been highly honourable to itself, and beneficial to Europe, but an office which it was in some measure called upon to undertake by the events of the preceding year. The event to which I particularly refer was the treaty of Pilnitz, by which Russia and Prussia avowed their intention of interfering in the internal affairs of France, if they should be supported by the other powers of Europe, which certainly was to all intents and purposes an aggression against France. The circumstances of the transaction, still more strongly than the transaction itself, pointed out the propriety of this mediation on the part of Great Britain. This treaty, I really believe, was never intended to be acted upon; a circumstance which certainly does not lessen the aggression, much less the insult which it carried to France. The Emperor at that time was importuned by the emigrant nobility and clergy to interfere in the domestic affairs in France. We must be just in our criticism upon measures, and to be so, it is fit that we should put the question home to ourselves. If any two nations should form a treaty in which they declared their intention to meddle with the internal concerns of Great Britain, should we not consider it as an unjustifiable outrage and an aggression? Why then should we refuse to the French the same spirit of independence, the same quickness of sensibility, the same dignity of character as we claimed for ourselves? The principle of this treaty of Pilnitz, had undergone much discussion; but the history of the circumstances with which it was accompanied have not been canvassed. It was those circumstances that induced him to believe that Great Britain might have mediated with honour and success. I consider the treaty of Pilnitz, as an act of aggression, but in my opinion it was a menace, which the parties themselves did not intend to carry into effect. This did not diminish the insult, nor make the indignity the less; but this fact, which was well understood by statesmen, opened the door for negotiation from which Great Britain might have profited, and have gained immortal honour, as well as immeasurable advantage, by preserving the peace of Europe. The fact was, that the principal courts were so situated at the time, that no one or two of them could act but by general consent. Austria could not act without the consent of Russia, nor either of them without that of Prussia, and Prussia did not wish to hazard the fate of such an enterprize. When those powers were in this state of uncertainty, that was the very moment for England to become a mediator; and if this country had at that time proposed fair terms of accommodation

commodation to the parties, the matter might have been compromised, and the peace of Europe preserved, at least for some time, for God knows the period of peace is at all times uncertain. If England had then come forward as a mediator, the questions to be agitated would have related solely to Lorraine and Alsace, and is there any man that believes, laying aside the internal affairs of France altogether, that under the impartial mediation of this country, all the difficulties respecting the tenures of the nobility, and the right of the chapters in those two provinces, might not have been easily settled to the satisfaction of the disputants? I cannot conceive that ministers, by directing their schemes, and adopting the measures which they have pursued, could be influenced by the depraved and truly impolitic idea, of feeling satisfaction at beholding the growing seeds of discord, under the idea that this country would flourish, whilst the other powers of Europe were exhausting themselves in contention and war. Neutrality I admit to be better than to have a part in the contest; but to a nation like Great Britain, whose prosperity depended upon her commerce, the general tranquility of Europe is a far greater blessing (and thus it fortunately happens that the interests of humanity and the interests of states are inseparably united) than any partial neutrality which it could preserve. I hope, therefore, that it was upon no such contracted views, that ministers declined the office of mediators at the period to which I allude. One would think, however, that after refusing such interference, they would have been the last men in the world to intermeddle with the internal government of another country.

"Having proved that the event of the 10th of August made no difference in our relative situation, I trust it is not necessary for me to refer to the horrible scenes that were disclosed in France, in the month of September; I merely mention them that it may not be said that I wished to pass them over in silence, or without expressing those feelings which in common with all mankind I experienced, on hearing of atrocities which have excited the indignation of Europe, and which have been accompanied with the groanings of humanity. However monstrous they have been, they seem notwithstanding to have no relation to the present question; they have no small resemblance, at the same time, to the massacres in Paris in former periods; massacres in which Great Britain was much more nearly affected, than by the events of the month of September, 1792, in which she nevertheless did not interfere; a conduct, the propriety of which it fell to the province of the historian to discuss; and to historians alone must the

the massacre of September 1792 be also left; for though individual members had thought them a fit topic with which to inflame the rage of mankind, ministers had never contended that they were a legitimate cause of war.

“We come next to that important event the successful invasion of the French upon the Austrian Netherlands, under General Dumourier. How far it would have been wise in this country to have permitted France to remain in possession of this key to Holland, I am not going to argue. But what happened in October was apprehended in April; and if it is once admitted as a principle, that it would have been impossible in this country to have allowed to France the quiet possession of this territory, would it not have been wise in this country to have prevented the invasion, by a mediation between the two powers? Perhaps, it may be said, that they trusted that the great military power of Austria would be able, if not to resist the invasion in the first instance, at least to compel them to retire. If this was the policy with which they acted, it certainly was a policy more than ordinarily shallow. It would have been perhaps in this, as in every instance of a similar nature more wise, to adopt a resolution at the outset, and to act upon it with uniformity, firmness, and consistency. Supposing France to be successful, did you expect to strike in at the end of the war, and speak to France as you did in the case of Russia and the Porte, when you vauntingly said to Russia, you shall not keep Ockzakow as an indemnity for the expences of the war? What was the consequence, however, when you came forward in this arrogant and imperious tone? You was not seconded by the country; you were condemned, as assuming haughty and unwarrantable pretensions, by every impartial man in Europe; and in the end you were obliged to send a minister to Petersburg to recant, retract, and to shrink from every thing that you had said. Had you pursued the same conduct in respect to France, you would have been reduced to the same dilemma. The more the aggrandisement of France was to be dreaded, the stronger motives we had to have exercised the office of a mediator before the war commenced. Shortly afterwards Lord Gower was recalled from Paris, a circumstance which I always lamented, because every means of conciliation and of explanation was thereby taken from us; in case of any misunderstanding that might arise, we were left to the chance of having it inflamed and exaggerated, and consequently we were daily exposed to the dangers of a quarrel. Monsieur Chauvelin was permitted to continue in this country indeed, but in a dubious character, and not

not treated in a way to favour conciliation, and this brings me to the immediate causes of the war.

"These have generally been reduced to three: first, the way in which certain individuals belonging to the Corresponding Society in this country were received by the government of France. Secondly, the decree of the 19th of November. And, thirdly, the claims which were set up against the monopoly held by the Dutch of the navigation of the Scheldt. The first appears to me to be so insignificant as not to be worthy of a serious answer. In order to give it shape, in order to give it form, in order to make it fit for being put down on paper, you must begin with assuming that there was a government in France to whom you might complain, and from whom you might demand redress. But was there ever any complaint made, or any dissatisfaction stated. Respecting the decree of the 19th of November, did you ever complain of it, did you ever demand that it should be either revoked or explained? This is a circumstance so intimately connected with the existence of government, that I know not how to separate them. You refused to recognize the government of France, and from that moment all the means of conciliation and explanation were at an end. Things were then brought to the *ultima ratio regum*, for the moment that you cut off all means of explanation, by recalling Lord Gower, you virtually made a declaration of war. But though you arrogantly and unwisely refused to recognize the government of France, you allowed M. Chauvelin to remain here, and from the papers which passed between him and the king's ministers at the time, the French seem to have shewn a strong disposition to explain that decree. Why then, it will be asked, did they not explain it? Because they did not know what explanation would be satisfactory. But it is admitted by all the writers on the laws of nations that I have read, that an insult, an outrage, or even an aggression, is not sufficient or legitimate cause of war, till an explanation, or redress, is demanded and refused, and that the party who refuses an opportunity of explanation to the other, is the aggressor. This opportunity, however, was denied to the French, and upon these principles England was the aggressor. Upon the opening of the Scheldt, it was not necessary to petition France for peace. Is there any man who does not believe, that if a negotiation had then been opened, that matters might not have been arranged to the mutual satisfaction of the parties? This was even admitted by the House: for what was the favourite argument at the time? England is the last power in Europe upon whom they would

would make war ; but after devouring the rest of Europe, they will swallow you up at last. Upon this part of the argument I am a good deal relieved by subsequent events. And here I am sorry to allude to the opinions of a gentleman (Mr. Burke,) who is no longer a member of this House, but from the part he took in the politics of the country at the time, and the effect which his eloquence has produced, I find it impossible to speak of the history of the times, without saying something on the doctrines and sentiments of that able and respectable man. In a most able performance, he has charmed all the world with the brilliancy of his genius, delighted the country with the charms of his eloquence, and in as far as that cause went to produce this effect, plunged the country into all the calamities consequent upon the war. I admire the genius of the man, and I admit the consistency, integrity, and usefulness of his long public life ; I cannot however but lament that his talents when, in my opinion, they were directed most to the interest of his country, produced very little effect, and that when he espoused sentiments different from those which I held to be just, at that time, that then his exertions should have been crowned with a success that I deplore. Never, certainly, was there a nation more dazzled than the people of this country were by the brilliancy of this performance of Mr. Burke. It has unfortunately proved to be the brilliancy of that fatal constellation, which has been painted by the poet (Milton) as leading mankind by its livid splendours to desolation, pestilence, and death.

Terrific splendour, whose red hot breath
Holds out destruction, fire and death.

This able man had no bounds in his opposition to my proposition for recognizing the government of France. It was represented as a proposition to petition France for peace, by throwing ourselves at her feet, to surrender our beloved sovereign's head to the block ; in fine, entirely, to give up the constitution. And why ? Because it was to treat with regicides, though the unfortunate event (for such I shall always call it) of the death of that unhappy prince, had not as yet taken place. When the question comes to be reconsidered, I am confident that the country will not be of this opinion. At present I have even ministers themselves as accessaries to that fact, after it has actually happened. By this petition or message to the directory, have they not acknowledged the power of those very men who pride themselves upon the part that they took in promoting that unfortunate event, and who now celebrate it by an anniversary festival ? For what do I
mention

mention this, but to shew that I did not wish to surrender the constitution, which has been handed down to us from our ancestors, cemented with their blood, and that it was no part of my design to bring the head of our beloved sovereign to the block. But to return to the opening of the Scheldt.

"I am not one of those who conceive the navigation of the Scheldt to be of no importance to Holland; in its present circumstances, I think it was of very little importance. It may be asked, however, are you to judge what is and what is not for the interest of Holland? Are not the Dutch much better judges of what is for their interest than you are? Far, far better certainly is my answer. But did the Dutch themselves, at the time, think it an object worth disputing about, or did not we drag them involuntarily into the contest? A variety of other arguments were used at the time. I do not wish to recall the language of any particular gentleman to the memory of the House, but the argument being alledged against a proposition which I had the honour to make on the second day of the session, I have more particular reason to remember it. I was told, that we ought not to recognize the French republic, for fear of disgusting our allies. Let us inquire, then, who were our allies at the time? The States General were one. Then it was said, that even those who were disaffected to the interest of the Stadtholder, were so aristocratic in their sentiments, that they would spurn with indignation at French principles, and that the invasion would heal all the internal divisions which subsisted in that republic. Notwithstanding these promising assertions, however, I have heard, and I know it is commonly believed, that Holland was not conquered by the arms of France, but by the desertion of the Dutch themselves. Our other allies were Austria and Prussia. Whether the king of Prussia has acted to this country with fidelity and honour or not, whether he has performed his engagements, or whether he has violated the faith of the treaty, we have never been informed by ministers: but this I will ask, whether after granting him an enormous subsidy, a subsidy most extravagant, when compared with the amount of the services which he has performed; whether, had you recognized the French republic, he would have deserted you one day sooner, or swallowed up more of the treasure of the country than he has done? With respect to Austria, is there any man who seriously believes, that though we had recognized the French republic, that we might not have availed ourselves as much as we can do at this moment, of the service of that power? Even, though Austria had been disgusted, all that she would have done, would have been
been

been to make a separate peace, which would probably have been the means of restoring general tranquility, because that would have happened before we engaged in the war. But if this danger would have attended the recognition of the French republic before, may not the same effect be produced by the late negotiation at Basle, in which Austria did not join? It was argued that a recognition implied an approbation of every thing that had passed. But this I denied when the objection was taken, and still persist in denying.

"On the question of—Who was the aggressor?—I repeat, that by the law of nations, as it is explained by the best of writers upon the subject, we were the aggressors, because we refused to give to France an opportunity of removing the grievances of which we complained.

"We come next to the period at which we began to take an active part in the contest. When our armies first appeared on the field, the enemy retired from the territories which they had occupied; they were driven out of Austria, Holland was safe. They were completely driven out of the Netherlands, and you were in possession of almost all French Flanders. At this period when our arms had been crowned with such remarkable success, Mons. Le Brun, minister of foreign affairs sent a person of the name of Maret, with proposals for peace, on the part of the French, which were not listened to by his majesty's ministers. Why then, I ask, did you not make peace at this prosperous juncture? when the enemy were defeated in every battle, when they were driven from all the frontiers of our allies which they had occupied, when we had made a considerable impression upon French Flanders; when, excepting Savoy, they had not one foot of land belonging to our allies, and when they might have been willing to purchase terms of peace by a considerable sacrifice of territory? Why did we not make peace in these circumstances? Why, because the system of neutrality on which ministers had set out was deserted; because you no longer confined your views to the security of your allies; but infatuated with success, you began to seek for indemnity. The declining to negotiate at this period, I set down as a marked cause of our succeeding calamities. I cannot help remarking, that there has been a good deal of inconsistency in the mode of arguing adopted by those who have been averse to negotiation. When the French were successful, I was asked,—What! would you humble the country so far as to beg peace from the enemy, in the moment of her victories? And when the allies were successful in their turn, I was told that we must treat at a time when our armies

were

were every where triumphant, and when nothing but defeat and disgrace marked the progress of the enemy; it was even at one time thought adviseable to push our success so far as to march to Paris. Upon the project of effecting a counter-revolution in France, having said so much upon it on former occasions, I shall not enlarge upon it now. The great defect in the management of the war, however, has, in my opinion, been the want of determinate object for which you were contending. You have neither carried on war for the purpose of restoring monarchy in France, nor for your own advantage. While the emperor, in Alsace, was taking towns in the name of the king of Hungary, you were taking Valenciennes for the emperor, proclaiming the constitution of 1791 at Toulon, in the name of Louis XVII. and taking possession of Martinique, and summoning Dunkirk, for the king of Great Britain. What has been the consequence of this want of object? You have converted France into an armed nation, and given her governors the power of marshalling all the strength of the kingdom against you. The royalists in France also, so little understood your intentions that they did not join you; and the reason was obvious; they did not know whether you were at war for the purpose of re-establishing the ancient monarchy of France, or for the purpose of aggrandizing yourselves by robbing France of her territories.

"So much had been said in respect to the unfortunate Mons. La Fayette, that I do not think it necessary for me to enter into a defence of the conduct of that brave man. It is within the knowledge of almost every one, that that exalted character sacrificed every interest of a private nature for the general good of his country; and this fact I am sure was evident to the whole world, that he was a friend to the constitution of 1789, and a friend to the French monarch. He emigrated after the 10th of August, because he found his endeavours to establish the form of government of which he approved, that of a monarchy, limited by just restrictions, vain and fruitless. What was then done with respect to him? Under pretence of his having been before in the service of the enemy, he was seized, upon neutral ground, by certain robbers in the service of the king of Prussia, and thrown into the dungeon of a loathsome prison, in which situation this distinguished man, who had undoubtedly every reason to have expected the commendations at least of the party to whom he went over, was kept, year after year, without any interest being made in his behalf by those who were bound so to do by every principle of honour and humanity. It is true the ministers of this country have not, in

direct terms, of approved such conduct towards this brave but unfortunate officer; but surely it might have been thought, if they had been desirous to conciliate this body of men, whose constitution they announced at Toulon, that they would at least have made a point of procuring the enlargement of this most estimable character. It might have been thought that in return for a subsidy of 3,000,000*l.* the King of Prussia could not hesitate at the enlargement of one prisoner. But when a motion was made by my right honourable friend, (General Fitzpatrick) it was said that it was impossible for this government to interfere. About this time Prussia makes a separate peace, and this oppressed man is hurried to one of the Austrian prisons, and there infamously, and in violation of every human law, detained by the Emperor, under the shameful pretext that he is not his prisoner, but the prisoner of the alliance. The wife of this unfortunate gentleman, who had been long detained in prison in France, is set at liberty, and desirous of giving her husband an additional proof of her affection, repairs to Vienna, and requests leave of the Emperor to visit her distressed husband. The emperor condescends to grant her request, but in what manner does he grant it? When the wretched lady arrived at Olmutz, the officer who had the care of Mons. La Fayette told her, with openness and candour, that if she resolved to go down to the dungeon to her husband, she must resolve to submit to share in all the horrors of his captivity. [A burst of indignation and sorrow broke from every part of the House.] This, however, had no terror to the constancy of her affectionate heart, she plunged into his dungeon, and there she now lies with him, the living and yet buried victims of this inhuman power. Nay, this is not all, she applied for leave to have a female attendant, instead of a male, about her person; this, she said, even the implacable Robespierre had not denied her!—but even this request was cruelly refused to her! This is the way you treat the man who was the friend of the French monarch, whose cause you pretend to have taken up arms for; it is thus you entitle yourselves to depend upon the assistance of the royalists. Besides, (as if it were not enough that our ministers had not interfered for the deliverance of this gentleman, and for fear it should be understood that they did not participate in the measure) M. Alexander Lameth, who was also imprisoned by the King of Prussia, against the positive rights of nations, though he was allowed on account of ill health, a little more indulgence than La Fayette, yet that relaxation could not prevent him from contracting a disorder which was likely to baffle the aid of medicine

medicine; and when, by the advice of his physician and friends, he came to England for the benefit of the Bath waters, he is in the country but a few days, and during that time confined to his bed, when he receives the peremptory injunctions of the minister to quit it without delay; he is not permitted a moment's tixie after the orders are given, lest he should contaminate the air of Great Britain, he too who was the friend and supporter of the French monarch, and who strove to restore him to his throne, he who had emigrated from France as a royalist; this is the man you thus ignominiously and shamefully send out of the kingdom, in a neutral vessel too, to the danger of his being carried into Calais, and conducted to the guillotine. What could be more injurious to the character of the country than such conduct? Any person who had seen M. Lameth with the broken and decayed constitution, would not have conceived that he was in a state to be dangerous to the government; and thus this gentleman, who had justly rendered himself dear to all who loved rational liberty, and to whom the emigrant nobility of France owed such obligations, was driven from England. By this act it appeared that none but the persons who adhere to the ancient unlimited monarchy of France—none but those who were the idolaters of the feudal slavery of that unhappy kingdom, were to be permitted to remain in England, and that at the very moment when, by our message to the present government of France, we profess the desire of treating for the establishment of peace, we have given this proof of our regard for the most moderate of the advocates for liberty in France. It certainly was not calculated to inspire them with confidence in the sincerity of these professions; and I cannot help pointing out to the indignation of mankind the treatment which M. La Fayette, M. Lameth, and their companions have suffered from these governments which call themselves regular and religious, and for the preservation of which, the present war was undertaken.

“ With respect to the treatment of General Dumourier, though I do not mean to place him exactly in the same point of view as the two gentlemen I have just mentioned, yet the behaviour of the allies towards him has not been less impolitic; to afford an asylum and offer our protection to these men, who disgusted by the party with whom they served, withdrew their assistance, was surely the only effectual way to encourage others to follow an example so hurtful to their enemies. It is said that the legitimate object of Great Britain in this war was, to obtain from France a just and honourable peace; that
 this

this was the object of the confederation of the allies. Why, then, was not that object attempted, when that confederation existed in its full power? Why were two of the powers, Prussia and Spain, suffered to melt away, and withdraw their aid, without making any overtures for such a peace? You may say it was not your fault, that you could not foresee their secession; let me however observe, when statesmen take upon themselves to form alliances with other powers, they should know something of the characters of the princes with whom they make such alliances, and how far it is probable they will keep to the engagements they enter into. With regard to the King of Prussia, there was every reason to suppose, long before the event took place, that he would make peace with France; that it was his interest so to do; and as to Spain, it was apparent to the most short-sighted statesman, that her ministers could not protract the conclusion of a peace with the victorious republic without endangering the existence of the Spanish monarchy itself. It was therefore an incumbent duty on ministers to have foreseen the probable consequences of their alliances; if they had possessed any of that necessary foresight, they would during the last session of parliament have exerted their endeavours to have procured a peace, while the confederacy was acting in concert, and would not have waited till the confederacy was dissolved.

“ It is alleged that the form of government was not such as a peace upon any sure foundation could be made with. I, however, am one of those who think that the government, as to external relations, was of no consequence to the contracting parties. If an absolute government is, as it is thought to be, the best to contract with, surely no one will deny but France was an absolute government during the tyranny of Robespierre, as well as during the reigns of the prior and succeeding factions. The acts of these factions had never been thwarted with respect to external relations; but you say you must wait till there is a regular constitution established. Is that the time to regain your losses by negotiation, when they have settled themselves in a permanent government, ascertained the limits and boundaries of their conquests, made the whole subject to their general laws, and given what was your territory every inherent quality of their own departments? We were told several years ago, that the French were reduced to that extremity, that they could not possibly find resources to enable them to continue the contest much longer; and only last session it had been asserted, with a degree of confidence, that they were not upon the verge of destruction, but in the actual gulf; that they

they were in the last agony. A twelvemonth had elapsed since they had been in that agony, and really it is the first time I ever heard of any set of people falling from such a precipice, and continuing so long in agony. I certainly must admit, that last year, while France was labouring under this agony, the emperor, with the assistance of this country, was enabled to retake part of the conquest which had been made of his dominions, and this was looked upon as an accomplishment of the prediction, that the French were reduced to the last extremity; that they were not in a capacity ever to recover themselves; and were actually suffering the last agony. It would naturally have been expected, that death would have been the consequence of this agony, but was that the case? Far from it. The events of the last three weeks, have been of a nature sufficient to prove, that their agonizing struggles may in the end destroy their enemies, and draw them into that gulf of ruin, in which they had flattered themselves the French had been irrevocably buried. The state of the French finances has been another argument of their inability to continue the war. God forbid that the finances of this country should ever be so involved: but the French have passed over the worst consequences, resulting from the state of their finances; France has been in that situation, wherein it has been necessary to call forth all the property of the country, in order to maintain the public quarrel. Without recurring to the mode of argument which was made use of the preceeding day, with respect to the new mode of taxing capital, I hope if ever we should be in the situation of the French, that we should not hesitate to spend the whole capital of the country, rather than have a constitution imposed upon us by a foreign enemy; I had rather all should be taken away by the calamities of the present war, than, to make use of the language of an honourable gentleman opposite to me, commerce should perish; that we should be forced to submit to one, two, three, or four requisitions of all the adults in the kingdom; all this, though sorry I should be to see it, I would rather submit to than that my country should ever experience the miseries of absolute servitude. You have reduced France to the situation of bankruptcy; but that bankruptcy is past, the inconveniencies of it are over, and now they have the whole resources of the country to bring forth against you. It is now twelve months since we conceived them in such a state of bankruptcy, as to be incapable of resistance. It was the boast of Austria, that she had recovered her losses; but we see the campaign open this year with such gigantic efforts,

as soon the verge of destruction, but in the actual battle, as

as to leave no room to hope, that we can ever be able to resist them.

“ At the commencement of the present session his majesty, in his speech from the throne, intimated a disposition to negotiate, and had more fully manifested that disposition in his message of the 8th of December. Why then did not his ministers take immediate steps to open a negotiation? Why did they not at that time (the winter) which was peculiarly favourable for such a measure, as the campaign was not, and could not well be opened for some months? Instead of this, we find the first step taken was on the 8th of March, three months after the expression of the earnest desire for peace contained in the king's message; and in four months after the same sentiments had been avowed in his speech from the throne. This delay has not been occasioned by a wish to consult with our allies, and obtain their concurrence, for it does not appear that they sanctioned or disapproved it. An allusion was indeed made to them in Mr. Wickham's letter, but to justify the delay, the application should have been made in the name of them all, and some specific terms should have been offered. This was not the case. Mr. Wickham's letter was such, as might have been agreed upon in a quarter of an hour, instead of three months. But this letter, after all, said nothing more than was contained in the king's speech, and it cannot be produced as a new proof of the desire of ministers for peace. It has been said in this House, and his majesty's ministers have particularly supported the opinion, that the contagion of French principles is highly dangerous to this country; those principles and their supporters in France, have been treated with every mark of insult and contempt, with every expression of disgrace and detestation. The first thing ministers should have done, was to remove the unfavourable impression, the hostile disposition which their language and conduct must have created; and the first thing towards accomplishing this, was a full and unequivocal recognition of the French republic. Towards the conclusion of the American war, some gentlemen in this House thought an acknowledgement of the independence of America should be made as the price of peace. I always thought otherwise, and that it ought to be made freely and gratuitously. Whether I was right or not, the present is a question materially different. We have no claim on France, like that which we had on America, and therefore the less would have been the sacrifice in recognizing the republic.— So far from doing this, Mr. Wickham's note does not even

hint

hint at the terms that would be acceptable. This reservedness may in some cases be prudent and wise. In the present case I see neither prudence nor wisdom. Instead of either recognition or offers, you tell the 'directory your minister is not empowered even to negotiate. To argue this point fairly, I must put myself in the situation of the enemy, and here I must ask, what can I think of such a communication from ministers; who for several years have traduced the principles and government in France, and reviled all the ruling men in that country; from ministers who delayed it three months? I could not believe the sincerity of their offers.

"It is not regular to mention what has passed in former debates; if however, I may be permitted to allude to the arguments advanced a few evenings ago, upon the subject of the king of Sardinia's subsidy, we shall find, from his own mouth, a full illustration of the minister's motives, in making the pretended offers of peace through Mr. Wickham. On that occasion, it was said, that it was by no means certain, the overtures of his Sardinian majesty were made with the view of obtaining peace. It was most probable that they were made in consequence of the pressure of circumstances, and that all his object was to know, what were the conditions on which the French would consent to a pacification, as he had no real intention of putting an end to the war. I cannot conceive more happy expressions to explain the views of his majesty's ministers, in making overtures through Mr. Wickham. They were no doubt actuated by the same motives that guided his Sardinian majesty, and the French might well suppose that their pretended offers were produced by the pressure of circumstances, and made with the view rather of continuing than concluding the war. The pretence set up by the French, that they could not give up any territories which had been consolidated with the republic, is, indeed, unjust, but it is a matter that doubles my indignation against those ministers who have brought us into this lamentable situation, who have deferred any proposition for peace till a period when the difficulties are such, that there is no prospect of obtaining it on safe and honourable terms. I see a great triumph on the other side of the House, and I do not wonder at it. Their object was to delay overtures of peace till they could not be accepted, and they have succeeded. This may be a manœuvre in war, but it is not an act of which a minister, sincerely desirous of peace, can boast. That it was such a manœuvre, I am convinced, by the eagerness and exultation with which the correspondence has been published. Is there no better means of making the government

vernment of France believe the sincerity of your wishes for peace? Why is it not considered how other peaces have been made? Why not make your disposition for peace known by various other channels than an open negotiation? And above all, why not recognize the republic, and renounce any design against it on account of the principles on which it was founded?

“When that great man, the late lord Chatham was consulted respecting the best mode of terminating the unfortunate dispute with America, did he send to know what were the terms demanded by the Americans? No: his opinion was, that nothing would effect a compleat conciliation, but a compleat change in his majesty’s councils—(*A laugh on the treasury bench.*)—Gentlemen may laugh, but I do not understand how the calamities of the people, brought on by the present councils of his majesty, can be a subject of merriment. To remove these calamities, a total change, not only in the councils of his majesty, but in his counsellors, is absolutely necessary; to suppose, after their recent conduct, that they have abandoned these principles of action which have brought on us so many misfortunes, is absurd. They have not in any way manifested such a change. The administration which conducted the American war, was found unfit to settle the peace, and yet lord North, of whom as a private man I never can speak but with respect and esteem, had a most conciliating disposition, and never was considered to be personally anxious to establish our dominion over America, neither did he speak with so much acrimony of our enemies as has lately been the case. He might have treated with more advantage than our present ministers, and yet it was found necessary that he should resign. The change of feeling towards the French must have been very sudden in the minister, for at the very time he was making pacific professions, he was sending an expedition to the coast of France, which if it had succeeded, would have compelled him to declare Louis XVIII. king, and deny the authority of the executive directory. Had the island of Noirmoutier been taken in the name of Louis XVIII. in whose name it was summoned by a British officer, how could ministers have recognized the republic? It appears their conversion is very sudden, and sudden conversions are very suspicious. It is but too manifest that they never were desirous of negotiating a peace with the French republic. They might, indeed, draw up a paper that might serve as a declaration in a court of law, but could not satisfy a more liberal judgment of the sincerity of their wishes for peace. I do not wish to visit the sins of the father upon the son,

son, I do not wish that the descendants of the House of Bourbon should be treated in the manner in which they treated the unfortunate House of Stuart; but if your pacific offers were sincere, you should have disowned Louis XVIII. as king of France. You should have recalled lord Macartney, who was sent as ambassador to him, and avowed that you made war on France as a republic, and consequently had recognized it. It would have been a moral act of justice in you to have declared this to Louis XVIII. and it would have been an act of prudence to yourselves, with a view of convincing the directory of the sincerity of the change in your sentiments; it would have satisfied the unfortunate emigrants respecting their fate, and it would have satisfied the French government of your actual solicitude for peace.

“ And here I will beg pardon of the House, for entering into a short digression on the double dealing that has been used towards the unfortunate emigrants from France, and in passing will observe that it is a most consoling circumstance to me, that not one of them owes the smallest atom of his misfortunes to any thing I ever did or said. It was natural that those unhappy men when they heard that the estates of Englishmen were insecure, unless the estates of the emigrants were restored; when they heard that we could not make peace with the republicans, without laying the head of our sovereign on the block; when they heard that Great-Britain was fighting for her very existence; it was natural for them to say, we may safely risk ourselves in the same bark that carries Cæsar; we may venture our fortunes along with that of the British empire. With these opinions, which they had imbibed from speeches delivered in this House, the royalists had been drawn from all parts of France, fully persuaded they would be cordially received here. But how had they been treated? They had been duped with ambiguous declarations, made purposely to deceive them into an idea that they were to fight for the restoration of French monarchy, and the emigrants; when, in fact, they were only to fight for the fluctuating views of ministers, who never regarded their personal welfare, or the cause they wished to support, as an object of real importance. In this manner many of the emigrants had been seduced to their ruin, and it would be but an act of justice to tell them we are not now fighting for the restoration of the French monarchy, we are not now fighting to replace you in your property, our only object now is, to regain the territories we have lost; we fight only about the conditions of peace. The question now is, whether ministers have really changed their sentiments respecting the origin and ob-
VOL. IV. 1796. 3 R jects

jects of the war. If they have, they should prove it by some unequivocal act or declaration. If they have not, as I suspect, then this House should entreat his majesty to change his councils. I know it will be said, 'What! you have been speaking three hours, and all for the purpose of procuring a change of ministers, because such a change might be advantageous to yourself.' To this I only can answer, that as to my having views of personal ambition, however desirable a thing power may be; however desirable from the motive of employing it to the best end, the interests of humanity, it is nevertheless quite out of the question. The maxims that have been adopted, and acted upon, in the course of the present war, and the principles which are now countenanced, make it altogether impossible for me, and I can speak I am sure for others, to aspire to any situation of responsibility. Those maxims and principles must all be retracted and reversed, the two late acts, which I continue to think subversive of the constitution, repealed, and the precedent declared to be pernicious; and there must be a full and perfect conviction in his majesty's mind, and in that of the people, that all these measures have been wrong, before men who love and venerate the constitution can think of any public situation: As all this is not likely to happen, it is idle to talk about a change of counsellors. We must try to accomplish that then which is more probable, to change the councils, if not the counsellors, and to bring them to see the errors of their past conduct. No minister who commenced and carried on a war ever made an advantageous peace; but if the present ministers expect to prove an exception to this rule, they should shew that they are seriously convinced of their past errors: they should renounce the principles on which they have acted, before they can hope to put an end, with honour and safety, to a war which they have conducted with so much rancour. It has been said, Let us persevere a little longer, and we shall succeed; mandates are as much depreciated now, as assignats were formerly; France cannot therefore continue the contest. In answer to this I will only say, look at the effects of the war upon ourselves and consider well how long we shall be enabled to carry it on. Between fifty and sixty thousand men have already been sent to the West-Indies; the mortality has been great among them, and the advantages very little; if we have taken Martinique, St. Vincent's and Grenada are laid waste. The Dutch possessions, it is supposed, will form our chief indemnification at the peace. I will say little of the fairness of taking these from a nation,

nation, to preserve which, we went to war. I am told, ministers do not wish the stadtholder to be restored; but I will only remark, that the extent of our colonies are a great incumbrance to us in time of war; they exhaust our strength, and if our maritime force shall ever be equally opposed at sea, their possession will be very precarious. We have completely failed in all the objects for which the war was begun. Holland is lost, the king of France exiled, and the aggrandizement and power of the republic is more alarming than ever. Of our allies, the king of Prussia has sustained the least injury; the king of Spain has been forced to make peace; and the king of Sardinia, who, we are told, is the very pattern of fidelity, proves also to be an example of misfortune. The empress of Russia has indeed suffered nothing. It is impossible not to see, that her only object in the alliance was to plunder Poland, in which she has been collaterally supported by England. This is a mortal blow to another professed object of the war, the balance of power. Will any man believe that the avowed object, the destruction of jacobinism in Poland, was the real cause of dividing that unfortunate country? And will any man contend that England and France united, might not have prevented that transaction, and by that means preserved the balance of power, in Europe? But Poland was abandoned to its fate, suffered to be sacrificed, annihilated, destroyed, in supporting those vicious principles which guide ministers, and have involved us in the present war. These principles must now be deserted. If the country is to be saved, we must retrace our steps; that is the only cure. All other remedies are mere palliatives, which must rather prove mischievous than useful, I shall therefore recommend a complete change of system, to which purpose I shall move,

"That an address be presented to his majesty, most humbly to offer to his royal consideration, that judgment which his faithful commons have formed, and now deem it their duty to declare, concerning the conduct of his ministers in the commencement and during the progress of the present unfortunate war. As long as it was possible for us to doubt from what source the national distresses had arisen, we have in times of difficulty and peril, thought ourselves bound to strengthen his majesty's government for the protection of his subjects, by our confidence and support. But our duties, as his majesty's counsellors, and as the representatives of his people, will no longer permit us to dissemble our deliberate and determined opinion that the distress, difficulty, and peril, to which this country is now subjected, have arisen from the misconduct of the king's ministers, and are likely to subsist and increase as long as the same principles which have hitherto guided these ministers, shall continue to prevail in the councils of Great Britain.

"It is painful for us to remind his majesty of the situation of his dominions at the beginning of the war, and of the high degree of prosperity to which the skill and industry of his subjects had, under the safeguard of a free constitution, raised the British empire, since it can only fill his mind with the melancholy recollection of prosperity abused, and of opportunities of securing permanent advantages wantonly rejected. Nor shall we presume to wound his majesty's benevolence by dwelling on the fortunate circumstances which might have arisen from the mediation of Great Britain between the powers then at war, which might have ensured the permanence of our prosperity, while it preserved all Europe from the calamities which it has since endured. A mediation which this kingdom was so well fitted to carry on with vigour and dignity, by its power, its character, and the nature of its government, happily removed at an equal distance from the contending extremes of licentiousness and tyranny.

"From this neutral and impartial system of policy his majesty's ministers were induced to depart by certain measures of the French government, of which they complained as injurious and hostile to this country. With what justice those complaints were made, we are not now called upon to determine, since it cannot be pretended that the measures of France were of such a nature as to preclude the possibility of adjustment by negotiation; and it is impossible to deny, that the power which shuts up the channel of accommodation must be the real aggressor in war. To reject negotiation is to determine on hostilities; and, whatever may have been the nature of the points in question between us and France, we cannot but pronounce the refusal of such an authorized communication with that country as might have amicably terminated the dispute, to be the true and immediate cause of the rupture which followed."

"Nor can we forbear to remark, that the pretences under which his majesty's ministers then haughtily refused such authorized communication have been sufficiently exposed by their own conduct, in since submitting to a similar intercourse with the same government.

"The misguided policy which thus rendered the war inevitable appears to have actuated ministers in their determination to continue it at all hazards. At the same time we cannot but observe, that the obstinacy with which they have adhered to their desperate system is not more remarkable than their versatility in the pretexts upon which they have justified it. At one period the strength, at another the weakness, of the enemy have been urged as motives for continuing the war; the successes, as well as the defeats of the allies have contributed only to prolong the contest; and hope and despair have equally served to involve us still deeper in the horrors of war, and to entail upon us an endless train of calamities. After the original professed objects had been obtained by the expulsion of the French armies from the territories of Holland and the Austrian Netherlands, we find his majesty's ministers, influenced either by arrogance, or infatuated by ambition and vain hope of conquests, which, if realized, could never compensate to the nation for the blood and treasure by which they must be obtained, rejecting, unheard, the over-

tures

tures made by the executive council of France, at a period when the circumstances were so eminently favourable to his majesty and his allies, that there is every reason to suppose that a negotiation, commenced at such a juncture, must have terminated in an honourable and advantageous peace: to the prospects arising from such an opportunity they preferred a blind and obstinate perseverance in a war which could scarce have any remaining object but the unjustifiable purpose of imposing upon France a government disapproved of by the inhabitants of that country. And such was the infatuation of these ministers, that, far from being able to frame a wise and comprehensive system of policy, they even rejected the few advantages that belonged to their own unfortunate scheme. The general existence of a design to interpose in the internal government of France was too manifest not to rouse into active hostility the national zeal of that people: but their particular projects were too equivocal to attract the confidence, or procure the co-operation of those Frenchmen who were disaffected to the government of their country. The nature of these plans was too clear not to provoke formidable enemies, but their extent was too ambiguous to conciliate useful friends.

"We beg leave farther to represent to your majesty, that at subsequent periods your ministers have suffered the most favourable opportunities to escape of obtaining an honourable and advantageous pacification. They did not avail themselves, as it was their duty to have done, of the unbroken strength of the general confederacy which had been formed against France, for the purpose of giving effect to overtures for negotiation. They saw the secession of several powerful states from that confederacy, they suffered it to dissolve without an effort for the attainment of general pacification. They loaded their country with the odium of having engaged it in a combination charged with the most questionable and unjustifiable views, without availing themselves of that combination, for procuring favourable conditions of peace. That from this fatal neglect, the progress of hostilities has only served to establish the evils which might certainly have been avoided by negotiation, but which are now confirmed by the events of the war. We have felt that the unjustifiable and impracticable efforts to establish royalty in France, by force, have only proved fatal to its unfortunate supporters. We have seen with regret the subjugation of Holland, and the aggrandizement of the French republic, and we have to lament the alteration in the state of Europe, not only from the successes of the French, but from the formidable acquisitions of some of the allied powers on the side of Poland, acquisitions alarming from their magnitude, but still more so from the manner in which they have been made, thus fatally learning that the war has tended alone to establish the very evils, for the prevention of which it was avowedly undertaken.

"That we now therefore approach his majesty to assure him, that his faithful commons heard, with the sincerest satisfaction, his majesty's most gracious message, of the 8th of December, wherein his majesty acquaints them, that the crisis which was depending, at the commencement of the present session, had led to such an order of things, as would induce his majesty to meet any disposition to negotiation

ation on the part of the enemy, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect, and to conclude a general treaty of peace, whenever it could be effected on just and equitable terms, for himself and his allies.

"That from this gracious communication, they were led to hope for a speedy determination to this most disastrous contest, but that with surprise and sorrow they have now reason to apprehend that three months were suffered to elapse before any steps were taken towards a negotiation, or any overtures made by his majesty's servants.

"With equal surprise and concern they have observed, when a fair and open conduct was so peculiarly incumbent on his majesty's ministers, considering the prejudices and suspicions which their previous conduct must have excited in the minds of the French; that instead of adopting then open and manly manner which became the wisdom, the character, and the dignity of the British nation, they adopted a mode calculated rather to excite suspicion, than to inspire confidence in the enemy. Every expression which might be construed into an acknowledgement of the French republic, or even an allusion to its forms, were studiously avoided; and the minister, through whom this overture was made, was, in a most unprecedented manner, instructed to declare, that he had no authority to enter into any negotiation or discussion relative to the objects of the proposed treaty.

"That it is with pain we reflect that the alacrity of his majesty's ministers in apparently breaking off this incipient negotiation, as well as the strange and unusual manner in which it was announced to the ministers of the various powers of Europe affords a very unfavourable comment on their reluctance in entering upon it, and is calculated to make the most injurious impression respecting their sincerity on the people of France. On a review of many instances of gross and flagrant misconduct, proceeding from the same pernicious principles, and directed with incorrigible obstinacy to the same mischievous ends, we deem ourselves bound in duty to his majesty, and to our constituents, to declare, that we see no rational hope of redeeming the affairs of the kingdom but by the adoption of a system radically and fundamentally different from that which has produced our present calamities. Until his majesty's ministers shall, from a real conviction of past errors, appear inclined to regulate their conduct upon such a system, we can neither give any credit to the sincerity of their professions of a wish for peace, nor repose any confidence in their capacity for conducting a negotiation to a prosperous issue. Odious as they are to an enemy, who must still believe them strictly to cherish those unprincipled and chimerical projects which they have been compelled in public to disavow, contemptible in the eyes of all Europe from the display of insincerity and incapacity which has marked their conduct, our only hopes rest on his majesty's royal wisdom and unquestioned affection for his people, that he will be graciously pleased to adopt maxims of policy more suited to the circumstances of the times than those by which his ministers appear to have been governed, and to direct his servants to take measures, which, by differing essentially as well in their tendency, as in the principle upon which they are founded, from those which have hitherto marked their

their conduct, may give this country some reasonable hope, at no very distant period, of the establishment of peace suitable to the interests of Great Britain, and likely to preserve the tranquillity of Europe."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "It is far from being my intention, sir, unnecessarily to detain the attention of the House, by expatiating at any great length on the various topics introduced into the very long and elaborate speech which you have now heard pronounced. The right honourable gentleman who delivered it, thought proper to lay considerable stress on the authority of a celebrated orator of antiquity, who, from a retrospect of past errors, established it as a maxim, that we should rectify our conduct for the future; and that if their were errors of incapacity only that had occasioned our misfortunes, and not an absence of zeal, strength, and resources to maintain our cause, and secure our defence; instead of such a disappointment being a cause of despair, it should, on the contrary, invigorate our exertions, and reanimate our hopes. But in a question so momentous and interesting to the country, as undoubtedly the present question must be; if it can be deemed expedient to run out into a long retrospective view of past calamities, surely it must be far more so to point out the mode by which their fatal effects may be averted, and by proving the origin of the evils complained of, to judge of the nature and efficacy of the remedies to be applied. Whatever therefore our present situation may be, it certainly cannot be wise to fix our attention solely on what is past, but rather to look to what still can, and remains to be done. This was more naturally the subject that should be proposed to the discussion of any deliberative assembly. Whatever might have been the origin of the contest in which we are engaged, when all the circumstances attending it were duly considered, it had the effect of uniting all candid and impartial men, in acknowledging the undisputed justice of our cause, and the unjust and wanton aggression on the part of the enemy. Such having been, and still I presume to say, being the more general opinion, prudence then must tell us to dismiss all retrospective views of the subject, and to direct the whole of our attention to what our actual situation requires we should do. The right honourable gentleman must have consumed much time in preparing the retrospect he has just taken of our past disasters; and he has consumed much of his time in detailing it to the House; but instead of lavishing away what was so precious on evils which, according to him, admitted of no remedy or change, would it not be more becoming

ing him, as a friend to his country, and an enlightened member of this House, to attend to what new circumstances, and to trace out the line of conduct which in the present state of things, it would be prudent to pursue. In the close of his speech the right honourable gentleman alluded to his former professions respecting the prosecution of the war. According to these professions, he, and every gentleman who thought with him, declared, that should the enemy reject overtures of peace, or appear reluctant to enter into negotiation, when proposed, then he, and every man in the country would unite in advising the adoption of the most vigorous measures; and that not only such conduct on the part of the enemy would unite every englishman in the cause, but that while it united England, it must divide France, who would be indignant against whatever government or governors should dare to reject, what was the sincere wish of the majority of its inhabitants. Instead therefore of expatiating on the exhausted state of the financial resources of the country, and running into an historical detail of all our past calamities, a subject which almost engrossed the right honourable gentleman's speech, I must beg leave to remind him of those his former professions, and invite him to make good the pledge he so often gave to this House, and to the country, and not to enflame the arrogance and unjust pretensions of the enemy, by an exaggerated statement of our past misfortunes, or of our present inability to retrieve them by a spirited and vigorous prosecution of the war. His feelings as an Englishman, and his duty as a member of parliament, must assuredly induce the right honourable gentleman to exert his abilities in suggesting the most effectual means of insuring our success in the contest, especially since he heard the late arrogant and ambitious professions of the enemy. All retrospective views I therefore for the present must regard as useless, and think it far more wise and urgent to provide for the success of future exertions; not that I debar myself from entering into the retrospect to which I am challenged, which I am ready to do with the indulgence of the House, but because I feel it of more serious importance to call your attention, not to the retrospect alone, but rather to the actual state of things, which the right honourable gentleman has entirely omitted. And, first, let me observe, that, while I endeavour to follow the right honourable gentleman through his very long detail of facts and events, I shall follow him as they bear on a particular conclusion which he wishes to draw from them, but which the country does not call for, and which it will not admit. What is the conclusion to which he wishes to lead us?

us? Does it not go to record a confession and retraction of our past errors? an avowal that, instead of a just and necessary war, to which we were compelled by an unprovoked aggression, we are embarked in a contest in which we wantonly and unjustly engaged, while our defence is evidently such as our dearest interests call for, and which a regard to justice, and to every moral principle, legitimates and sanctifies? Can then this House adopt a motion, which directly contradicts its recorded opinions, and which tends to force on it new councils; or, in other words, to oblige it to rescind all the resolutions it has come to since the commencement of the war? The right honourable gentleman has, in rich and glowing colouring, depicted our exhausted resources; the want of vigour in our measures, and the inattention of ministers to seize on the more favourable opportunities for making peace. He also assumes, that the sole cause of the war, was the restoration of monarchy in France; and that this cause afterwards shifted into various other complexions. All these charges, however, as well as the unjustness of the war, he establishes only by presumption. The right honourable gentleman then goes back to 1792, when he says the first opportunity was offered of our procuring peace to Europe, but of which ministers did not avail themselves. He also refers to a speech made by me on the opening of the budget of that year, which he describes as having been uttered in a tone of great satisfaction, triumph, and exultation. It is true, indeed, that I then felt much satisfaction in exhibiting to the country the high degree of prosperity to which it had then reached: not less satisfaction, I am sure, than the honourable gentleman seems to feel in giving the melancholy picture that his motion has now drawn of its present reduced situation; and I felt the more vivid satisfaction in viewing that prosperity, as it enabled us to prepare for, and enter into a contest of a nature altogether unprecedented. Now when that prosperity is over, the honourable gentleman dwells on it rather rapturously, though it seemed little to affect him at the time it was enjoyed. But, not only are ministers accused of having neglected the opportunities of making peace, but when they have attempted overtures of that nature, they are charged with insincerity, or with holding forth something in the shape and make of these overtures that must create suspicions of their sincerity in the enemy, or provoke their disgust. What can countenance such an accusation, I am sadly at a loss to discover. For at the periods alluded to, every motive of public duty, every consideration of personal ease, must have induced me to exert the best of my endeavours

vours to promote a peace, by which alone I could be enabled to effect the favourite objects I had in view, of redeeming the public debt and the 4 *per cents.* as alluded to by the honourable gentleman. No stronger proofs could be given of the sincerity of government to promote and ensure peace, than was then given by his majesty's ministers; and if they were disappointed, the fault is not with them; but their conduct must be understood and justified by the imperious necessity, which in 1793 compelled them to resist an unprovoked aggression. As to the accusations urged against us of not offering our mediation, or even refusing it when solicited, they are equally of little weight. Are ministers to be blamed, for what it would be hazardous in them to attempt, and would it not be hazardous to propose a mediation where both parties were not ready to agree? Our erecting ourselves into arbiters, would only expose us to difficulties and disputes, if we were determined as we ought to be, to enforce that mediation on the parties who refused to admit it. What is the great use which the honourable gentleman seems to be so eager to derive from that peace, if so procured? Is it fit that we should go to war in order to prevent the partition of Poland? In general policy I am ready to confess that this partition is unjust; but it does not go, as is said, to overturn the balance of power in Europe, for which the right honourable gentleman, as it suits his argument, expresses greater or less solicitude; that country being nearly divided equally between three great powers, it can only contribute to the undue aggrandizement of either. When attempts had been made to prevent the partition of Turkey, they were disapproved of; although these attempts had for their object to prevent the partition of Poland, which is now so much inveighed against. As to the latter transactions that have occurred between this country and France, they are too recent in the memory of the House, to require that I should call their attention to them. The resolutions to which we have come on this subject, are too sacred and too solemn, the opinion too settled and too deeply formed, to be lightly reversed. We cannot, surely, forget the first cause of complaint, allowed to be well founded, and the famous decree of the 19th of November, which was an insult and an outrage on all civilized nations. Seditious men, delegated from this country, with treason in their mouths, and rebellion in their hearts, were received, welcomed, and caressed by the legislature of France, and what was the explanation received from M. Chauvelin on these subjects of complaint? Did it amount to any more than that the French would not intermeddle with the form of government in other countries, unless it appeared that the majority of the people required it to be changed?

changed? And after all their declarations, that they did not intend any addition to their conquests, did they not persist in keeping Belgium, till they forced upon it their new-fangled constitution, and their boasted liberty? Their explanations regarding the Scheldt, and their intentions upon Holland, were equally unsatisfactory; their ultimatum was, that they would give no further satisfaction; and their refusing a fair explanation made them the aggressors in reality, if not in form. Still, however, the channel of negotiation was not cut off by this country: as long as the King of France retained a shadow of power, M. Chauvelin continued to be received in an official capacity; and even after the cruel catastrophe of that unfortunate monarch, his majesty's minister at the Hague did not refuse to communicate with General Dumourier, when he expressed a wish to hold a conference with him relative to some proposals of peace. When all these opportunities had been offered and neglected, they declared war, and left us no choice, in form or in substance, but reduced us to the necessity of repelling an unjust aggression. In every point of view, they therefore were evidently the aggressors, even according to the right honourable gentleman's own principles, and we certainly took every precaution that it was either fit or possible to do to avoid it.

"I cannot help wishing to recal the attention of the House to the general conclusion of what I have stated, for upon that rests all I have to say on the first part of the right honourable gentleman's propositions. If the House had been hurried by passion into the war, if it had been hurried by the false opinion of others, or by any unjust pretensions of its own, would it, he wished to know, go to the enemy to atone for its misconduct, and accede to such conditions as the enemy might offer? Could it happen that a war not ordinarily just and necessary, when applied to every moral principle, should in form be so untrue, that, after three years standing, it should be found all illusion? If the House cannot acknowledge these things, much less can I believe, admitting all the depreciated statements of our resources to be true, and founded to such an extent as to make us submit almost to any humiliation, that last of all we should submit to the pride and ambition of an enemy, whose hypocrisy, injustice, tyranny, and oppression we have so repeatedly witnessed, reprobated, and deplored; and yet that was what the right honourable gentleman proposed. He proposed that we should bow down before the enemy, with the cord about our necks, when we have now felt the self reproach of doing wrong, to renounce and abjure

abjure our recorded professions, and receive a sentence of condemnation, as severe as undeserved.

"The right honourable gentleman's next accusation against ministers is, that they have been guilty of a radical error, in not acknowledging the French republic. It is said this has been the bar to all treaty: this has prevented every overture in subsequent situations. I admit that it has so happened that, we have never acknowledged the republic, and I admit also, that no application nor overture for peace, on the part of this country has been made till lately. I admit, that after the siege of Valenciennes, I did say it was not then advisable to make conditions, and I admit also, that when we struggled under disadvantages, I was equally averse; whence the right honourable gentleman infers 'that if you will not treat for peace when you are successful, nor treat for it when you are unfortunate, there must be some secret cause, which induces us to believe you are not disposed to treat at all.' Is it reasonable, I ask, when a just hope is entertained of increasing our advantages, to risk the opportunity which those advantages would secure of making better terms; or, is it reasonable when we experience great and deplorable misfortunes to entertain a just apprehension of obtaining a permanent and honourable peace, on fair and permanent conditions? These are the principles on which I have acted, and they were raised upon the fair grounds of human action. If success enough were gained to force the enemy to relinquish a part of their possessions, and we might not yet hope to be wholly relieved from similar dangers, except by a repetition of similar efforts and similar success, was it inconsistent for a lover of his country to push those efforts further upon the reasonable expectation of securing a more permanent and honourable peace? And, on the other hand, when we experienced the sad reverse of fortune, when the spirit of our allies was broken, our troops discomfited, our territories wrested from us, and all our hopes disconcerted and overthrown, did it argue a want of reason or a want of prudence not to yield to the temporary pressure? The same situations to a well tempered mind would always dictate the same mode of conduct.

"In carrying on the war, we have met with misfortunes, God knows, severe and bitter; exclusive of positive acquisitions however, have we gained nothing by the change which has taken place in France? If we had made peace, as the right honourable gentleman says we ought to have done, in 1793, we should have made it before France had lost her trade; before she had exhausted her capital; before her foreign pos-
sessions

sessions were captured, and her navy destroyed. This is my answer to every part of the right honourable gentleman's speech relative to making peace at those early periods. But a discussion is once more introduced as to the object of the war. Ministers have repeatedly and distinctly stated the object, but it is a custom on the other side of the House, to take unguarded and warm expressions of individuals in favour of the war, for declarations of ministers. Thus, many things which fell from that great man (Mr. Burke) have since been stated as the solemn declaration of government; though it is known that, to a certain extent, there is a difference between the minister and that gentleman upon this subject. But then it is to be taken as clear, that ministers are not only anxious for the restoration of monarchy in France, but the old monarchy with all its abuses. That ministers wished to treat with a government in which jacobin principles should not prevail, that they wished for a government from which they could hope for security, and that they thought a monarchy the most likely form of government to afford to them these advantages, is most undoubtedly true; but that ministers ever had an idea of continuing the war for the purpose of re-establishing the old government of France, with all its abuses, I solemnly deny. If, for the reasons I have before stated, it would not have been prudent to have made a peace in the early stage of our contest, surely it would not have been advisable when the enemy were inflated with success. The fate of the campaign of 1794 turned against us upon as narrow a point as I believe ever occurred. We were unfortunate but the blame did not rest here—that campaign led to the conquest of Holland, and to the consternation which immediately extended itself among the people of Germany and England.—What, however, were the conduct of ministers at that period? If they had given way to the alarm, they would have been censurable indeed; instead of doing so, they immediately sent out expeditions to capture the Dutch settlements, which we may now either restore to the stadtholder, if he was restored, or else we may retain them ourselves. If, instead of that line of conduct, his majesty's ministers had then acknowledged the French republic, does the right honourable gentleman, does the House suppose, that the terms we should then have obtained would have been better than those we can now expect? Then, it was asked, why did not administration negotiate for peace before the confederacy was weakened by the defection of Spain and Prussia; because, of course, better terms might have been obtained when the allies were all united, than

could

could be expected after they became divided? It undoubtedly would have been a most advantageous thing, if we could have prevailed upon the kings of Spain and Prussia to have continued the war until the enemy were brought to terms, but that not having been the case, we at least had the advantage of the assistance of those powers, while they remained in the confederacy. Before any blame can attach upon ministers upon this ground, it will be necessary to shew, that, prior to the defection of Prussia and Spain, terms were proposed to us, which we rejected. Whether these two powers have gained much from the peace they have made, is not a question very difficult to be answered. Whether Spain was really in that state that she could not have maintained another campaign, without running the risk of utter destruction, is a point upon which I do not choose to give an opinion; but with respect to Prussia, she certainly enjoys the inactivity of peace, but she has all the preparation and expence of war.

"The right honourable gentleman again adverts to the form of government, which, he says it was the intention of ministers to establish in France, and alludes particularly to the affair at Toulon; and from that subject the honourable gentleman makes a rapid transition to the case of M. de la Fayette. With respect to what might be the treatment of that unfortunate gentleman, the cabinet of Great Britain had no share in it, nor did ministers think themselves warranted in interfering with the allies upon the subject. With regard to Mr. Lameth, the right honourable gentleman certainly did ministers justice, when he said they could feel no antipathy to that person; and they certainly did feel great reluctance in ordering him to quit the kingdom: but as to the motive which induced them to take that step, they did not conceive it to be a proper subject of discussion—the act of parliament had vested discretion in the executive government, and they must be left to the exercise of it.

"The right honourable gentleman has also alluded to the situation of the emigrants, and asserted, that if government were of opinion that there was no prospect of making an attack with success upon France, it was the height of cruelty to have employed them; this however was not the case, there were at different times well grounded expectations of success against that country, and surely it cannot be considered as cruelty to have furnished the emigrants with the means of attempting to regain their properties and their honours.

"The right honourable gentleman has also thought proper,

in

in his speech, to dwell at considerable length on the state of the enemy's finances. He is willing to admit that their finances are, as he says I have stated them to be, in the very gulph of bankruptcy, in their last agonies. But then the right honourable gentleman proceeds to ask me, whether, notwithstanding this financial bankruptcy, they have not prosecuted their military operations with increased vigour and success? whether, notwithstanding these their last agonies, they may not make such dreadful struggles as may bring their adversaries to the grave? I will not now detain the House by contrasting the finances of this country with those of the enemy; I will not now dwell on the impossibility of a nation carrying on a vigorous war, in which it is annually expending one third of its capital; but I will tell the right honourable gentleman that the derangement of the French armies at the latter end of the last campaign, the exhausted state of their magazines and stores, and their ultimate retreat before the allied troops, furnishes a convincing proof that the rapid decline of their finances begins to affect in the greatest degree their military operations. How far their recent successes, on the side of Italy, deserves credit to the extent stated by the right honourable gentleman, I shall not take upon me to say: I have had no intelligence on the subject, and therefore shall offer no opinion to the House.

“The next topic which I have to consider, is the argument drawn from the question of our sincerity in the message delivered to the French minister at Basle, on the 8th of March; and a great variety of observations have been suggested and urged upon that point. One inference drawn by the right honourable gentleman, arises from the circumstance of this message having been communicated four months after his Majesty's speech, and three months after the declaration made to parliament that his majesty was ready to meet and give effect to any disposition manifested on the part of the enemy for the conclusion of a general peace. In the first place it must be remembered, that neither the speech from the throne nor the declaration expressed any intention in the British government, to be the first in making proposals for opening a negotiation. The fair construction went no farther than to invite the enemy to make the first advances, if they were so disposed, and to shew that no obstacle would be opposed on our part to the capacity of the government they had chosen to negotiate terms with this country. Gentlemen, therefore, have no right to feel in any degree disappointed at the delay of the communication, since, in being the first to make
any

any overtures of peace, his majesty's ministers went beyond any pledge they had given, or any expectation that ought to be entertained.

"It has further been objected, that those proposals must be insincere, because it did not appear that on this occasion we had acted in concert with our allies. A sufficient answer to this may be given by the peculiar circumstances of affairs, the lateness of the season, and those communications being cut off, by which we and our allies were before enabled to maintain a ready intercourse. Had this ceremony been complied with, the delay which it would have occasioned must unavoidably have been greater than that of which gentlemen think themselves warranted to complain. They are, however, as much mistaken in their facts, as they are in their inferences, for this step was not taken without previous communication with our allies, and we acted in concert with them, though they were not formally made parties to the proposal; a ceremony which in my opinion would be wholly superfluous.

"Another proof, it should seem, of our insincerity is, that in the message alluded to we did not recognize the republic. It is truly generous in the right honourable gentleman, generous towards them at least, to find out an objection for the French which they themselves did not discover. We had the answer of the directory to our note, and they took not the least notice of the republic not having been recognized. If that had been a necessary and indispensable form, without which they considered themselves insulted, their natural conduct would have been to give no answer at all. On this point of recognition, however the right honourable gentleman is always extremely tender, and has it very much at heart. He holds up the example of America to us, as if it was an instance that had any application to the present question. The right honourable also boldly contends, that if we had paid the French government this mark of respect and confidence, it would have induced them in return to propose more moderate terms. I am, however, very far from expecting any such effect; for, in fact, the government of France never seemed to think of it; I do not consider the omission as an act of hostility, and they must be aware, that the proposal to treat in itself implied a recognition, without which it was impossible that a treaty should be concluded.

"To shew the consistency of the arguments on this subject, I shall take the liberty of recalling the attention of the House to those antecedent periods, when the gentleman on the opposite side of the House, in enforcing the French government, held

held up to our imitation the wise and temperate conduct of the court of Denmark, which maintained a beneficial neutrality with France, and with which the latter shewed itself capable of maintaining the necessary relations of amity and peace. It is indeed true that France has in a great measure respected the neutrality of Denmark, and observed with it the relations of peace, at least, if not of amity. What, however, destroys the right honourable gentleman's argument at once is, that this wise, peaceable, neutral, and amicable court of Denmark had not recognized the French republic till the present year. So that, in fact, Denmark did not consider the French government as one that it ought to acknowledge, till the form which it assumed rendered it in some degree equally admissible in the eyes of the other powers of Europe.

"Another argument of insincerity is, that we did not propose terms to the enemy, while we called upon them for theirs. This I conceive to be that which we had no right to do; the application did not come from the enemy, it was made on our part, and it would have been ridiculous to propose any particular terms to them till we were previously informed whether they were willing to treat at all. It has also been alledged, that we must have been insincere, because when we employed the minister at Basle to make this application, we did not at the same time give him the power to negotiate. It was extraordinary indeed that an observation of this kind should be urged by any person who professed the slightest acquaintance with diplomatic proceedings. I would ask the right honourable gentleman whether it was ever known that the person employed to sound the disposition of a belligerent party, was also considered as the proper minister for discussing all the relative interests, and concluding a treaty? The House must remember on former occasions, when the right honourable gentleman was so warm in the recommendation of a peace with France, whatever might be its government, that apprehensive of an adherence to that etiquette, which might prevent us from being the first to make overtures, he advised us to make recourse to expedients, and sound the disposition of the enemy, through the medium of neutral powers. As soon as France adopted a form of government, from which an expectation of stability was to be drawn, his majesty's ministers readily waved all etiquette, and would not let such forms stand in the way of the permanent object of the peace and tranquility of Europe, and they made direct proposals to the enemy. Had they, however, adopted the expedient proposed to them, and employed a neutral power to make their communications, was it to be expected that we

should appoint that neutral power our minister plenipotentiary to manage our interests, as well as those of our allies? The gentleman through whom the communications were made at Basle, is one perfectly qualified from his talents, his zeal, and his integrity, to conduct any negotiation; but whatever may be his character, it would be the height of imprudence, or rather folly, to entrust the management of a negotiation of such uncommon moment to the discretion of an individual, and at such a distance.

"The motives which induced his majesty's ministers not to employ the same minister who had made the advances, as the negotiator of a peace, are not confined to what I have hitherto stated; it was also necessary in order to shew our allies that we did not go beyond the line of that arrangement which was concerted with them, and that, true to our engagements, we had no separate object, and would not proceed a step without their concurrence. We wished to avoid any thing which could excite the slightest suspicion, that we were disposed to a separate negotiation, which was what France would wish, and what was her uniform aim during the present contest. This was a policy which in some instances was too successful with some of our allies, and which enabled her to enforce on them successively more harsh and unequal conditions. It was with a view to the same open dealing that it was thought proper to publish to the different courts of Europe the message and the answer, that the world might judge of the moderation of the allies and the arrogance of the enemy.

"There was one ground of sincerity which I believe the right honourable gentleman did not state; but which the directory rested upon principally, in their answer. This was the proposal for holding a general congress. How this could support the charge of insincerity, I am at a loss to conceive. The British government pointed out the mode of pacification. This the enemy thought proper to decline and to reproach, but did not attempt to substitute any other mode by which the object was likely to be obtained. So far from projecting any thing which could even justly be an object of suspicion, ministers had preferred that of a congress, which was the only mode in which wars were concluded in all cases wherein allies were concerned, ever since the peace of *Munster*, the two last treaties only excepted.

"This charge of insincerity was represented by the right honourable gentleman as the probable cause of the exorbitant terms demanded by the enemy:—"They are high in their demands," says the right honourable gentleman, "because they

they know you are not in earnest ; whereas, were they confident in your sincerity, they would be moderate and candid.' In my humble apprehension, the extravagance of their terms leads to an opposite conclusion, and proves that the plea of insincerity is with them only a pretence. If they really thought his majesty's ministers insincere, their policy would have been to make just and moderate demands, which, if rejected, would exhibit in the face of day, and of the world, that want of candour, and that appetite for war, which the right honourable gentleman joins in so unjustly attributing to us. But having, in fact, no disposition for peace, and led away by false and aspiring notions of aggrandizement, the government of France offered us such terms as they knew could not possibly be complied with. Did they know the spirit, temper, and character of this country, when they presumed to make such arrogant proposals ? These proposals I will leave to the silent sense impressed by them in the breast of every Englishman. I am, thank God ! addressing myself to Britons, who are acquainted with the presumption of the enemy, and who, conscious of their resources, impelled by their native spirit, and valuing the national character, will prefer the chances and alternatives of war to such unjust, unequal, and humiliating conditions.

"The plea of the French directory, that their constitution did not permit them to accept of any terms, which should diminish the extent of country annexed by conquest to the territories of the republic, the right honourable gentleman himself very fairly condemns ; because, if persevered in, it must be an eternal obstacle to the conclusion of any peace. That the interests of foreign nations should yield to those laws, which another country should think proper to prescribe to itself is a fallacy, a monster in politics, that never before was heard of. Whether then military successes are likely to enable them to preserve a constitution so framed, I will not now inquire, but of this I am certain, that the fortune of war must be tried before the nations of Europe will submit to such pretences.

"On a fair examination, however, will it appear, that the right honourable gentleman is right in observing, that this allegation could be no more than a pretext ? If so, is it not singular that the right honourable gentleman, who seems so shocked at this pretext of the law of the French constitution, should direct none of his censure against the legislators, or government of that nation, but vent all his indignation on the British ministers, for deferring their proposals for peace till the enemy had formed such a constitution as rendered peace impracticable ?

practicable? I will not now recount all those arguments which on former occasions, I have so frequently submitted to the House, nor the motives which induced me to decline all proposals for peace, till some form of government was established, which had a chance of being stable and permanent. Surely, however, it is too great a task imposed upon me to be able to foresee, amongst the innumerable and varying constitutional projects of the French, the precise system on which they would fix at last. Much less could I foresee that they would have adopted a constitution which even the right honourable gentleman himself would be induced to condemn. But, having so condemned it, he should in justice have transferred his censures to those by whom it was framed; instead of which, all the thunder of the right honourable gentleman's eloquence is spent at home, upon the innocent, while the guilty at a distance are not disturbed even by the report.

"However the spirit of this country may be roused, and its indignation excited, by the exorbitant conditions proposed to it by the enemy, yet even these extravagant pretensions should not induce us to act under the influence of passion. I could easily have anticipated that unanimity of sentiment with which such degrading proposals have been rejected by every man in this country, but our resentment, or our scorn, must not for a moment suffer us to lose sight of our moderation and our temper. We have long been in the habit of waiting for the return of reason in our deluded enemy, and whenever they shall descend from those aspiring and inadmissible projects which they seem to have formed, and are proceeding to act upon, we shall still be ready to treat with them upon fair and honourable terms. We are particularly interested in urging them to the acceptance of such a constitution as may be best suited to their character and situation, but we must take care that their constitution shall not operate injuriously to ourselves. We do not shut the door against negotiation whenever it can be fairly entered upon, but the enemy, so far from meeting us, say plainly, they cannot listen to any terms, but such as in honour we cannot accept.

"The terms of peace which the right honourable gentleman pointed at, and which, after all, he considers as very disadvantageous, are that the French may retain their conquests in Europe, and that we should keep our acquisitions in the colonies. What however is the proposal of the directory? No less than this: that every thing should be restored to them, and they in return are to give up nothing. It is also urged by the honourable gentleman, that we were to blame in so

abruptly

abruptly breaking off the negociation, and communicating the result to the world, together with the observations made upon it. To this I will answer, that the terms proposed by the enemy cut short all further treaty; and as to the communication of the result, it will have, at least, the important consequence of dividing the opinions of France, and uniting those of England."

Mr. *M. Robinson* said, that to much contained in the motion of a right honourable member, (Mr. Fox) he could undoubtedly subscribe, agreeing with him in every thing that related to the misconduct of the war on the part of government, but having acquiesced in the justice of its commencement, an opinion he found on reflection no reason to depart from, and deriving from the spirit manifested in the late communications of the French directory with this country little hope of its being determined under its present circumstances, in a manner consistent with the honour and security of the British nation; he held himself obliged to vote with the minister on the question of that night. To render the enemy, however, inexcusable, he asserted this country had a right to exact from the minister the withdrawing the embassy he had sent to the head of the house of Bourbon, a measure which could be construed no otherwise than as implying insincerity in his proceedings with the republic of France; and though by no means indifferent to the distresses of a family once eminently illustrious and unfortunate in proportion to the great reverse of circumstances they had recently experienced, Mr. Robinson said, he was unable to conceive the propriety of employing a noble lord whose talents were rendered useless to his country by the mockery of this appointment, in expeditions wild and extravagant as that of his present negociation and the embassy which had preceded it to China. He hoped the minister would neglect no means of procuring a peace to this country, but such a peace as might be esteemed honourable and satisfactory, and consequently productive of permanent effect; to terms of insufficiency and degradation, he trusted any man who asserted his right to the name of Englishman would be found incapable of giving his assent. He had been induced to trouble the House at that late hour of the night, he had intruded himself upon it that by the explanation of the vote he intended to give, that he might be enabled to ascertain that consistency of character which ought to be the result of the conduct of every constituent member of that assembly.

Mr. *Fox* said, that though he felt it somewhat unreasonable to trespass once more upon the patience of the House, by claiming

ing the usual privilege of reply; yet, at this period of the session and of the parliament, he was so anxious to have his sentiments fairly understood, that he would avail himself of an indulgence which he would not otherwise have required, and make a few observations upon the speech of the right honourable gentleman. At the beginning of his speech the right honourable gentleman seemed to dwell, with some degree of triumph, upon an imputed inconsistency which he affected to discover in his arguments on a former occasion, when Turkey was endangered by the Empress of Russia, and the recent dismemberment of Poland. Was the infamous partition of Poland in any respect to be compared with the circumstances of Turkey at the moment alluded to? The Turks, after unprovoked aggression, were humbled by the power of the Empress, and he had at the time reprobated the idea of the arrogant interference of this country to prevent her from obtaining that indemnification to which she was entitled. He had said, that if the concurrence of France, in a situation to act with effect, could have been obtained, he would have advised our interposition to prevent that horrible injustice, that infamous partition of Poland; a measure which would have been justified by a due regard to the balance of Europe. The right honourable gentleman however seemed to consider the balance of power as very little affected, because the division which took place among the three different states concerned in the transaction was so equal as to preserve that relation of strength which they mutually held to one another. This argument, upon its own principle, could only be good if the division had been so exact as to preserve the proportion, not in any three, but in all the states of Europe, by assigning a correspondent share to each. But when a minister went so far as to overlook the injustice of a few great nations swallowing up the possessions and destroying the independence of the little surrounding states, and sanctioning that robbery which kings might find it too easy to practice, merely because the plunder was equally divided amongst the guilty, there was an end at once to the balance of Europe. But what was the injustice and the infamy of this partition, how dangerous to the balance of Europe, when the population of Poland was equal to that of this country, and its natural wealth and resources great and important! It was, indeed, a terrible principle that was advanced by the right honourable gentleman, that no matter for this injustice, the balance of power remains the same, as those states who have divided the plunder, have maintained in this accession the proportion of strength they held to one another.

With

With regard to what had been called his special pleading on the subject of the communications between the French government and certain societies in this country, he would still ask how it was possible for us, without acknowledging the French republic then established, to found any proceedings upon those communications, or to conceive any offence without referring it to the government, and stating it as a ground of dissatisfaction? It was certainly true that he did consider the minister in 1792, as sincere in his wish for the continuance of peace, on which the honourable gentleman had said that this confession supported the presumption that ministers had not gone to war precipitately. What he meant to shew, however, was, that the general effects of the revolution in France were not the cause of the war, for at the time when ministers expressed pacific intentions and hopes, many of the events since reprobated and insisted upon had taken place, and he wished to confine the real causes to the three points which he had mentioned. The honourable gentleman said that at the beginning of the war the success was such as to justify the hopes they entertained. This was precisely what he had intended to illustrate, that, whether good or bad success occurred, the argument for the continuance of the war derived equal support with ministers from either event. In the end of 1793, it was said, that any proposals for negotiation would have been humiliating, and would have produced an offer of terms, which it would have been disgraceful to accept. Did the honourable gentleman recollect the language he held, and even announced from the throne, with regard to the events of 1793, when he said that the campaign had been as brilliant as could have been expected, and equal to the successes of the most glorious campaigns of the war of 1763. The support of monarchy in France was justified substantively, and as a means of promoting the security of this country. On the first point he presumed to differ, and he considered the support held out by this country to monarchy in France as one of the causes of that union which had prevailed among the French. With regard to security, it was a vague, indefinite object, nor was it easy to know to what it related. He understood that at the commencement of the war, not the establishment of monarchy, nothing but atonement and satisfaction were the topics insisted upon, and it could only be from the existing government that this satisfaction could be obtained, and a government recognized. With regard to M. de Fayette he was sorry that when the honourable gentleman found himself obliged so much to interfere in continental affairs, that on an occasion like this he possessed so little influence; what, however,

ever, could he say for the treatment experienced by Mr. Alexander Lameth in this country? The honourable gentleman said that whatever might have been the conduct of ministers, that House was not the place where he was to give any explanation. He had execrated the Bill (the Alien Bill) under which ministers had acted, on its first introduction, and had foretold the abuses that would be committed, which he now found to be realized. It was then said that the Bill inferred a responsibility on ministers for their conduct under it; if so, ministers had incurred responsibility, and this was the proper place to enquire into the subject. He asked them, for what reason Mr. Alexander Lameth was sent away? That gentleman had been a constitutionalist, many of whom were employed by us, and those alone were treated with harshness who would not draw their swords against their hereditary enemy. If there was any man deserving particular respect and attention, it was the man who had been the zealous assertor of limited monarchy, thrown unjustly into a Prussian dungeon, and his health greatly impaired; and yet he was marked out to Europe as the severest victim of our persecutions, and as an example to those who should refuse to fight against their country. It was said that the effect of the motion was humiliating, but for whom? Not for the country, which he wished to separate from ministers as much as possible, but for ministers alone. But it was said, that it was the operation of parliament too sanctioned by repeated votes. Did the honourable gentleman recollect in 1782, when the American war drew near a conclusion, that it had been sanctioned by repeated votes, and supported by great majorities. In the course of reading that morning, he found in the works of his deceased friend, Mr. Gibbon, an observation that during that war the sense of the people without doors, which had originally been favourable to it, began to turn, yet the House of Commons followed the change of public opinion, *haud passibus æquis*, a remark historical with regard to the past, which might have been prophetic with regard to the present. By submitting his present propositions, he wished to give the people of this country an opportunity of rescuing their character from any share in the guilt which ministers had incurred.

The honourable gentleman said too, that from the late beginning of the campaign of 1795, and from the success of the Allies at the conclusion of the campaign, the derangement and rapid decline of their finances might be conjectured; if the honourable gentleman, however, reasoned from cause to effect, might not he then reason from effect to cause, and from the
astonish-

astounding vigour and success with which the French had commenced the present campaign, conclude that their finances either had not been deranged in the degree alledged, or were now re-established? It was said that no authentic accounts were received of these successes; he nevertheless believed little doubt could be entertained of their truth. It was little doubtful that the French had an army of 70,000 men in Italy, and he was persuaded that when the German accounts, on which the honourable gentleman relied so much, arrived, the army of the French would be stated as much larger. It was urged that formerly it had been contended by opposition, that the making of proposals not accepted, would divide the French, and unite the people of this country. But surely it was understood, when this observation was made, that proposals were to be made in such a way as to have a fair chance of success. As to what the honourable gentleman said of Mr. Wickham's proposals, he had made the best defence of the conduct of the French; was it to be expected that any attention would be paid to a man who had no authority from the allies with whom we were connected, nor had any authority to make specific proposals, or would the honourable gentleman have caused the correspondence with Mr. Wickham, which was of a private nature, to be published, or would he have published any private communications that might have been made, had he been serious in his desire of pacification? With regard to the making of terms, he would deny, perhaps, that it was as well not, but certainly some attention should have been paid to the prejudices of the French. If the honourable gentleman reprobated the conduct of France, in not coming forward with proposals, why did he not avoid the conduct which he considered presumptuous in them? There might be reasons of policy which determined the French to adhere in appearance to the principle of annexation of the conquered provinces, as there the war was to be carried on, and it might be prudent to consult their inclinations. This he thought probable, he stated it, however, only from conjecture. He certainly considered the recognition of the French Republic as of the last importance, and much more necessary as a preliminary than the conditional recognition of America, during last war. Though the French, acknowledged by almost all Europe, and triumphant in their military career, might not condescend to complain, they would still feel the refusal, and resent the indignity. If the French had talked of the British nation, without any notice of his majesty, or the government, would not the honourable gentleman have dwelt on this proof of their

insincerity in their desire of peace? Since the French had bestowed upon the various republics of Genoa, Venice, Berne, &c. their titles of magnificent Doge, they had been upon better terms with these states. The French therefore felt from his conduct, that the minister discovered no serious inclination for peace. Much as he disliked the system of annexation which the French professed, still he thought that a fair chance had not been given to any proposals for negotiation. He wished the House to come to some resolution which would bring into action a different system of measures. Of the finances he had said little. He reprobated the practice of comparing the state of our finances with the adversity of the enemy, and thereby deriving arguments for perseverance. He was sensible that our resources were great; and he was happy to consider them in that light, but the efforts which the French had made, should convince us that their resources were not exhausted.

The House then divided on the motion,

<i>Ayes,</i>	-	-	-	-	42
<i>Noes,</i>	-	-	-	-	216

<i>Majority</i>	174
-----------------	-----

Adjourned.

The following is a Correct List of the Members who voted for Mr. Fox's motion, on Tuesday, May 10. for a compleat change of that system which has of late been adopted by his Majesty's Ministers.

William Lee Antonic, Esq.	Great Marlow.
Sir John Aubrey, Bart.	Clitheroe.
Hon. Edward Bouverie,	Northampton.
Joseph Randyll Burch, Esq.	Thetford.
George Byng, Esq.	Middlesex county.
William Colhoun, Esq.	Bedford.
John Courtenay, Esq.	Tamworth.
John Crewe, Esq.	Cheshire county.
Right Hon. R. Fitzpatrick,	Tavistock.
Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart.	Cumberland county.
Hon. Edward Foley,	Worcestershire county.
Right Hon. Charles James Fox,	Westminster.
Philip Francis, Esq.	Blechingly.
Charles Grey, Esq.	Northumberland county.
James Hare, Esq.	Knareborough.
John Harrison, Esq.	Great Grimsby.
Henry Howard, Esq.	Gloucester.

William

William Hussey, Esq.	New Sarum.
Joseph Jekyll, Esq.	Calne.
Jervoise Clerke Jervoise, Esq.	Yarmouth.
Thomas Kemp, Esq.	Lewes.
Edmund Lechmere, jun. Esq.	Worcester.
Samuel Long, Esq.	Ilchester.
General Macleod,	Invernesshire.
Patrick Miller, jun.	Dumfries.
Sir William M. Milner,	York.
Dudley North, Esq.	Great Grimsby.
William Plumer, Esq.	Hertfordshire county.
Hon. John Rawdon,	Appleby.
Right Hon. Lord John Russell,	Tavistock.
Right Hon. Lord William Russell,	Surrey county.
Hon. S. Andrew St. John,	Bedfordshire county.
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq.	Stafford.
William Smith, Esq.	Camelford.
Right Hon. Lord Robert Spencer,	Wareham.
Charles Sturt, Esq.	Bridport.
Michael Angelo Taylor, Esq.	Poole.
Right Hon. Lord John Townshend,	Knareborough.
Robert Vyner, junior, Esq.	Lincolnshire county.
Charles Callis Western, Esq.	Maldon.
John Wharton, Esq.	Beverly.
Roger Wilbraham, Esq.	Bodmyn.
Henry Penruddock Wyndham, Esq.	Wiltshire county.

TELLERS.

General Tarleton,	Liverpool,
Samuel Whitbread, junior, Esq.	Bedford.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, May 11.

The Bill to prevent the unlawful combination of journey-men paper manufacturers was read a third time and passed.

Christie's divorce, Falck's naturalization, and Aliens Bills, were read a third time and passed.

COMMITTEE ON THE CORN TRADE.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider of the high price of corn.

Mr. Lechmere rose to make his promised motion for the relief of the industrious poor. He contended that the high price of provisions was in consequence of consolidating a number of

small farms into one, assisted by the practice that prevailed among jobbers, forestallers, and regraters. After recapitulating many of his former observations on the same subject, he moved,—“That it be an instruction to the chairman of the committee, to move the House for leave to bring in a Bill to enforce the bringing of corn to public markets, and to prevent the exhibiting of adulterated flour to sale.”

Mr. *Francis* seconded the motion, and said that he was eager and desirous to take this and every opportunity to support the views and declare his entire concurrence in the principles and objects professed by his honourable friend, though he was very much afraid that the state of public business, and the lateness of the season, would make it impossible for his honourable friend to succeed in his intentions in the course of the present session. Mr. *Francis* bore witness to his zeal, though it had been perpetually defeated by accidents and impediments, which had put it out of his power to bring forward his motion at an earlier day. “No man,” said Mr. *Francis*, “could have taken more pains to collect information on the subject, nor do I believe that any member of this House is better acquainted with it than he is. I cannot pretend to the same knowledge, but I have as much zeal, especially in the cause of the poor; and he may be assured, that although he may be defeated now, he will always find me ready to support his benevolent views in another session, if I should happen to have a seat in another parliament. There are two advantages, however, which I have mentioned on other occasions, more than once, and which might be effected without any legislative interference of the House. I mean, by the influence and example of individuals; if, when they return into their several counties, they would give encouragement to the measure, and promote it, as I have done to the utmost of my power, at their own expence; I mean by providing every labouring man in every parish with the means of grinding his own corn. I have had a great number of models made of the hand-mills used in India, and distributed them as far as I had an opportunity. They are very simple in their construction, and might be easily improved by persons who have more skill in these matters than I have. What I wish is, that gentlemen who are desirous of serving the industrious poor, would give these hand-mills to such as are willing to make use of them.—Many of us have subscribed ten or twenty pounds in our parishes for the relief of the poor. The expence of providing hand-mills would not be so considerable, and I am convinced it would be much more effectual. Not only the whole profit of the miller, lawful and unlawful, would be saved to poor people, which

we

we all know is a very considerable object, especially to those who have nothing to spare, but all of us would have the great advantage of knowing with certainty, the materials of which our bread was made. I, for one, will assuredly grieve for myself, as soon as I can get into the country, and will do all I can to recommend the measure among my neighbours.

The next thing to be done is to provide a parish oven to bake generally for the poor; or if that be attended with difficulty, at least to oblige bakers to bake loaves at a fixed price, as they do pies and pastry. These two measures, fully carried into execution, I am perfectly sure, would give a relief to the industrious poor, far beyond what any gentleman who has not attended to the subject, would at first sight think possible. There are other improvements which might be easily made by exciting the skill of ingenious persons, and rewarding them for their trouble. These I shall suggest shortly in the words of a friend of mine, who, I believe, is as great a master of the subject as any man in the kingdom.

“The most effectual way of serving the public will be to give a handsome bounty to the man, who, in a given time, brings forth to public view the best wheat mill, acting on the cheapest and simplest construction, to be worked by man or boy with the least labour, and to be made with stones of at least two feet diameter, (those made of iron do not answer for wheat, and are much too tedious in their operation.) To give a small bounty for the three following improvements: First, to him who shall discover the best method of preserving yeast the longest, not less than six months, so as to remain perfectly sweet and proper for baking.—Secondly, to him who shall discover the best substitute for yeast, the same being adjudged to be perfectly wholesome, and effectual to its purpose.—Thirdly, to him who discovers, simplifies, and makes perfectly intelligible to the meanest capacity, the true French method of making bread with leaven. By these means, if you choose to make a motion to the purpose, you will have the blessings of the country and poor; since, if your bounties have effect, which I am sure they will, the millers trade will be in a great measure knocked up, and the bread be good and wholesome, and at two-thirds of its price, while the farmer’s honest profit will be the same.”

Mr. Francis concluded with saying, that, if measures of this kind were heartily adopted and steadily pursued, the certain consequence would be, not only that the poor would be better fed,

fed, and at a cheaper rate, but that all ranks of people would be provided with nourishment in this essential article, infinitely more wholesome and palatable than they are at present.— Whether in or out of parliament, he was determined to promote these useful and truly humane objects to the utmost of his ability.

Mr. *Martin* said, he thought the House indebted to the honourable gentleman for his indefatigable exertions in behalf of the poor. He was afraid the period of the session was too far advanced to make the present motion likely to succeed. He hoped, however, that many beneficial regulations would be adopted in the ensuing session; at the same time, he begged not to be understood as pledged to support any specific proposition.

Mr. *Buxton* declared he did not consider the Bill a sufficient remedy for the grievance of which the honourable gentleman complained. One part of the honourable member's proposition was superfluous, as it was impossible to sell corn at all, except by sample. The session however was so far advanced, and the business was of so much importance, he would move, "That the chairman do now leave the chair."

The House divided,

<i>Ayes,</i>	-	-	-	-	34
<i>Noes,</i>	-	-	-	-	10
<i>Majority</i>					24

LIST OF THE MINORITY IN FAVOUR OF MR. LECHMERE'S MOTION.

Mr. Francis	Mr. J. T. Stanley
Mr. Lygon	General Smith
Mr. Foley	General Tarleton
Mr. Jekyll	Sir Richard Hill
Lord William Russell	Sir William Dolben.

Mr. Lechmere, Teller.

WINE TAX.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* brought up a clause, that all wines paying duty, and imported into Great-Britain, after the 17th day of April last, up to the first day of August, should pay the same by instalments, which he moved should be added to the Bill as a rider; which was agreed to. The report was ordered to be received the next day.

DOG

DOG TAX.

On the question being put for the commitment of the Bill for imposing a duty on dogs.

Lord Sheffield stated, that the number of dogs were rather a disadvantage than a use to the lower orders, he therefore wished all the dogs, which were of no actual advantage, to be killed, and the tax to extend to unassessed as well as assessed houses; and moved, "That it be an instruction to the committee to receive a clause to that effect."

The *Speaker* informed his lordship, that such a clause would militate against the principle of the resolution of the committee of ways and means, on which the Bill was brought in and the committee could not regularly admit it; his lordship must therefore make a separate motion on some other occasion for the admission of the clause.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, the committee of ways and means being closed, he conceived the clause could not be received at all; the *Speaker* confirmed this.

Mr. Dent spoke against the principle of the Bill, as it applied to purposes contrary to his intention; he did not oppose going into the committee, but hoped some useful amendments would be made in order to make it operate as a beneficial regulation.

Sir R. Sutton argued for the Bill.

The House then resolved itself into a committee.

Mr. Lechemere said he wished to call the attention of the committee to ladies lap-dogs. He knew a lady who had sixteen lap-dogs, and who allowed them a roasted shoulder of veal a-day for dinner, while many poor persons were starving. Was it not therefore right to tax lap-dogs very high? He knew a lady who kept one favourite dog, when well, on Savoy biscuits, soaked in burgundy; and when ailing (by the advice of a doctor) on minced chicken and sweetbreads. He then proposed that every gentleman who kept a pack of kennelled hounds, should pay twenty guineas tax for them; and if un-kennelled, thirty guineas. Being informed that he was irregular in proposing this clause, he withdrew it.

It was then resolved, and agreed to by the committee, that the tax should take place on the 5th of July 1796.

Mr. Buxton proposed a clause (which was agreed to,) that gentlemen who kept hounds might compound with the revenue by paying 20l.

The House being resumed, the report was ordered for next day.

SLAVE CARRYING BILL.

The House being resolved into a committee on the slave-carrying Bill,

Mr. *Wilberforce* said he abandoned his idea of limiting the number of ships, but merely meant to limit the number of slaves in proportion to the tonnage.

General Tarleton and *Sir William Young* spoke against the Bill; and *Sir William Dolben* and Mr. *W. Smith* for it. After a conversation between several members, *Colonel Stanley* moved that the chairman report progress, upon which the members being counted, and only thirty-six present, the committee was of course adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, May 12.

Christie's divorce Bill, the Bill for granting costs in misdemeanours, the Bill for the encouragement of the manufacturing of sail-cloth, the Bill for allowing drawbacks on sugar, and the Bill for granting allowances to subalterns in the militia and their families, were read a third time and passed.

QUAKERS.

The House resolved on the re-commitment of the Bill for the relief of the people called Quakers.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair*, stated to the committee, that in consequence of the objections urged on a former day against the Bill, it was found convenient to make alterations in some of the clauses which had been agreed to in the former committee, and also in the other provisions of the Bill. If gentlemen still thought that alterations should be made, it might be done in the other stages, as he wished to press the Bill forward, fearing it should be lost by delay from the lateness of the session.

Several resolutions were then made and agreed to. The House being resumed, the report was ordered for the next day.

The *Master of the Rolls* said, he thought that something ought to be done in relief of the people called quakers: he did not however wish that privilege to be extended to them which his majesty's other subjects did not enjoy. This he was aware the Bill did; he, in consequence, hoped that the report would be well considered.

Mr.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair*, and Mr. *W. Smith* contended that the Bill extended no such privileges to quakers.

SARDINIAN SUBSIDY.

Mr. *Jekyll* stated, that he could not acquit himself of having regularly performed his duty to his constituents at a time when the House was almost at the close of its parliamentary existence, if he did not press an answer upon one very material and important question before that interval expired. The House must have heard of a variety of reports of the successes of the French armies in Italy, reports which were so connected in their general statements as to be tantamount to confirmation. By these reports it was pretty generally understood, that the French armies had almost pushed their successes to the capital of Sardinia, that the king of Sardinia was suing for peace, and placing two of his strongest fortresses in their hands, which were considered to be the key of his dominions, as a security for his engagement. In consequence of these reports he begged leave to ask the right honourable gentleman opposite, whether he intended to remit the 200,000*l.* lately voted by parliament to his majesty to fulfil his engagements with the king of Sardinia in the form of a subsidy? He desired to be understood, that he did not state this question indignantly, but for general satisfaction. He pitied the misfortunes of the king of Sardinia, and lamented that he should have incurred them by that desperate and dangerous alliance in which he had embarked. He feared that he was now trembling in his capital for his dominions, and therefore scorned to triumph over his distresses, but he thought it would be idle to call that a subsidy, of which co-operation was not the fruit. If the money voted by parliament was to be granted as an eleemosynary gift, let the House of Commons know so? and let the people who have been drained out of such immense sums for foreign princes, who have, one by one, deserted them, be told in what manner this also was to be applied.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, that as to the exact situation of the king of Sardinia, he did not know officially what it might be, but he believed by the fortune of war, he might be reduced to a very critical situation. The honourable and learned gentleman, however, could not suppose that whatever might be the final state of events, this subsidy would be continued. That it would cease immediately after the secession of that sovereign, was, he conceived, such a self-evident proposition as to need no comment.

Mr. *Jekyll* then asked, whether the subsidy would be kept back until these reports were authenticated?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer made no reply, but moved the order of the day.

SUCCESSION TO REAL ESTATES.

On the motion for the third reading of the Bill for granting a duty on the collateral succession of real estates,

Mr. *Francis* said—"Mr. Speaker, I should, indeed, be sorry that this pernicious Bill should finish its progress through the House, without my having had an opportunity of expressing my opinion of it more explicitly and distinctly, than by a silent vote. I do not mean to enter into any observations on the particular provisions of the Bill. The objections to it in detail on the score of injustice, hardship, and impracticability, I believe are endless. I hope they are insurmountable. Let the Bill pass as it is, with all its vices and all its absurdities. The more it is loaded with them the better. For that, I fear, is the only chance we have, of ever seeing it repealed. My objections are on principle, and fundamental. They are the result of the most careful attention and consideration, which I am capable of giving to any subject. I do not believe that it is possible for any human ability to answer them fairly. I look upon the Bill not merely as an act of taxation, but as a political measure, immediately increasing the influence of the crown, and full of danger in its obvious consequences to the constitution and freedom of the country. It appears in a form which never was assumed, and acts on principles which never were avowed in this House before. The essential qualities of the Bill are these. First, that it does not operate immediately, nor with all its force, but applies to cases and situations, which do not instantly exist, and which therefore individuals may hope, are remote from themselves, and may never reach them. Of course it annihilates that just and rational check, which the constitution relies on, in favour of the subject, namely, that the representative will not impose exorbitant taxes, without clear necessity, on his constituents, as long as he shares immediately and alike with those who are to pay. By far the greater part of the members of this House are already in possession of all that they have expected. But the most dreadful of all considerations is, that the tax is to operate, *not now*, but hereafter. What guard, then, have we left against the most profligate extravagance and waste of the public fortune, if no part of the burden, whatever it may be, is to be borne by ourselves? Suppose, for a moment, that by any possibility

bility the expences of an actual war could not be provided by taxes, of which the burden should not be felt till twenty years hence—How few would care or consider what the expence would amount to? Too many of us, I fear would say, "*The case will not happen in our time.*" But not only the entailed expence would be disregarded, but the war itself, and all its pernicious consequences, would be thought of with unconcern, as long as the money, by which it was supported, was not taken directly out of our pockets. So that all the checks derived from self-interest against profusion on one side, and profligate measures on the other, would be utterly removed. But secondly, this tax, whenever it does act, will not operate collectively, and at once on the whole community, but individually and successively upon one man after another. Here another guard against unjust taxes is taken away. When all men feel together, they will probably resist together. But when every individual may possibly hope that the burden may never fall upon himself, or remotely affect his posterity, he shrinks, of course, from united opposition, and looks to nothing but personal exemption, or personal compensation. At last, however, the effects of this tax appear to have made a more general impression. Some persons, I say it without the smallest satisfaction, though I have lamented their absence, have at last come forward to oppose it. In the last three years, no questions have occurred in which the honour, the safety, or the existence of their country was not concerned. This tax touches property in great masses, and this tax must be resisted. Sir, it happened to me lately to recommend it to some of our great enlightened ministers to look into history for instruction. I said it would enable them to judge, from the former policy and practice of the House of Savoy, of what the conduct of the Court of Turin might probable be in the present juncture. They heard me, as usual, with indifference and scorn. The event has now taken place, even beyond my apprehension. Why do I allude to this circumstance at present? To engage, if it be possible, the great landed proprietors of this country to look seriously at their own situation before it be too late. History in effect is prophecy; and in a general view and judgment of human conduct, even better than particular intelligence. I wish these great proprietors of masses of land to look into the history of Spain and France, and see what happened there to persons of their own level, and once as rich as themselves. The grandees of Spain thought *themselves* secure in their titles, and rank and fortune, and refused to make common cause with the people, when the laws

and liberty of their country were attacked and destroyed by Charles V. and Philip II. You know the consequence. The most insignificant and degraded order of nobility in Europe, are the *grandees* of Spain. In France the same event happened. The great lords were drawn from their estates and their castles, to attend on the monarch. By degrees they became slaves at Versailles, and for the most part had nothing to subsist on but the bounty of the court, *les graces de la Cour*. They, whose estates were left to them, if they happened to give offence to a minister or to a mistress, when there was no room in the Bastille, were sent back to their estates; they were *exiles dans leurs terres*. And banishment in fact it was, because their houses were in ruins, and their lands in desolation. Let our great proprietors look to these examples. The ruin which they suffer to be brought on other orders of the community will not stop there: *Their* turn assuredly will come. At present, I know, they are happy and secure. They think they are in no danger; that they have nothing to apprehend for themselves; and that all that they are doing is only to destroy the liberty of their fellow subjects."

Mr. Grey said, he did not rise to enter into any detail, but simply to state one objection. He understood this tax to be a tax upon collateral succession only, with a provision in favour of the second son enjoying an estate by entail from his father. Under that provision, he suspected this great inconvenience would arise, that, when a person deceased without issue had bequeathed his estates to his brother, entailing them upon his brother's son, the tax would operate upon the son collaterally, as deriving his inheritance from his uncle, and so operate *ad infinitum* on *direct* succession.

The motion for the third reading of the Bill was then put; and the House divided.

Ayes 48—Noes 46—Majority 2.

Mr. Sheridan then moved, that it be read a third time on this day three months; when the House again divided,

Noes 54—Ayes 53—Majority 1.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer then moved, that the third reading be postponed till the next day.

Ayes 54—Noes 54.

The numbers being equal, the Speaker gave a casting voice for the motion.

SLAVE CARRYING BILL.

The House renewed the committee on the Slave Carrying Bill, when Mr. Wilberforce's clause for regulating the number

ber of slaves in proportion to the tonnage, was objected to by General Tarleton, and a division being pressed upon it by General Smith, the House was counted out.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, May 13.

Several Bills were passed, but when that for voting the usual sum to the commissioners of the longitude was read, *pro forma*—

The Bishop of Rochester rose, to express his conviction that there was nothing unfair or improper in the disposition of the sum voted, although he wished that the particular appropriation of it had been laid before the public. He observed that this board was instituted in the reign of Queen Anne, and from that period to the present had received the sum of 38,000*l.* of which 34,000*l.* had been given in the present reign. It was to be observed also, that this by no means interfered with the sums given as rewards to ingenious men, for their discoveries in this scientific object; and that they were at no great expence was pretty obvious, for they merely published a valuable work or two, *Logarithmic Tables*, the *Nautical Almanack*, &c. but these, from their general request among our naval gentlemen, must have paid their expences, especially as the *Nautical Tables* usually came to a second edition. He therefore could wish, without objecting to the present vote, that before the annual grants were repeated, some statement might be had of the manner in which the last had been expended.

FINANCES.

The order of the day having been moved and read,

The Earl Lauderdale in substance addressed the House to the following effect: Much as I am accustomed to address your lordships, it is with truth I assure you, that in rising to call your attention to the subject I am about to discuss, I feel a degree of awe and anxiety which I have experienced upon no former occasion. It proceeds in a great measure from a sense of the importance of the subject; for, whatever difference of opinion may subsist between the noble lords in office and me in other respects, I am convinced, that neither they nor any man, who has given the most transient attention to the papers before you, will differ from me in thinking, that a more important subject of discussion never was submitted to your lordships' consideration. When we reflect on the manner in which the modern system of European politics has implicated the finance of every country with the nature and existence

istence of its government, the review of the comparative state of the public income and expenditure forms, perhaps every where, the most important object that can occupy the attention of the politician: but in this country, and in the critical situation in which we are involved by his majesty's ministers, without fear of contradiction I think I may affirm, that a more interesting subject of investigation never was presented to this House, nor to any other public assembly.

It is without affectation too I assure your lordships, that the feeling of anxiety, generated by a consideration of the nature of the subject, is in no small degree augmented by a sense of my own inability to execute the task. Unaccustomed till of late to attend to the minute details of finance, and compelled by a sense of duty to advance opinions in direct opposition to those who profess to have spent their lives in the study of this intricate science, and who have established their reputation upon the idea of their possessing a fund of minute and technical knowledge on this topic; I should be confident indeed if I did not feel some apprehension in submitting my opinions their to criticism, and to your lordships' consideration. There is one ground of apprehension, however, incident to those who address a public assembly, which I cannot at present feel: I mean the apprehension that arises from observing the anxious attention of a crowded audience; for when I contemplate the empty benches in your lordships' House*, and compare this circumstance with the importance of the subject on which you are this day summoned, I cannot help remarking, that a more disgraceful neglect of public duty never was exhibited upon any occasion. I fear it unfortunately proves, that there are many in this House who can have paid no attention to the very serious and interesting matter which is contained in the papers on your lordships' table; and demonstrates with too great a certainty, that there are those amongst us whose habits have deprived them of all anxiety for the fate of their country; for it is with shame I reflect, that at the moment when you are here honouring me with your attention to calculations which so nearly concern every individual among us, so large a portion of the hereditary guardians of the people's welfare are employing their faculties of calculation to estimate the exact minute when, uninformed themselves and uninstructed by the information of others, they may quit the frivolous pursuits of luxurious indolence to compliment the minister with a vote—with one of those confidential votes, a uniform succession of

* At this time only twenty-four peers were in the House.

which

which is perhaps the cause of the fatal calamities this county has now to lament.

Much indeed have we heard of plots and conspiracies, of the dangers attending the form and frame of our constitution, from pamphlets, public meetings, and corresponding societies: but it is such conduct on the part of your lordships that I consider as alone pregnant with real danger to the state, and as tending to undermine in the minds of the people of England all respect for the houses of parliament, all veneration for the ancient forms of our constitution.

It was my wish not to have introduced any topic extraneous from the immediate object of our debate: but I could not consistently with my duty be a witness to the state in which I see your lordships' house on this occasion, without remarking upon the apathy, perhaps the profligacy, of which this attendance exhibits but too evident a proof.

Before I proceed to call your attentions to papers which were moved for by my noble friend ||, a recollection of the mode in which his conduct was commented upon in this house, and of the authentic manner in which these comments have been since handed to the public, makes it necessary to state to your lordships the futility of the insinuation, that the noble marquis did not in his motion agitate the subject you were led to expect, and to explain to you the reasons why it falls to my lot to discuss before you the expences of the present war, and the debts and revenues of this kingdom.

It must be in the recollection of your lordships, that the first and principal object held out to you by the noble marquis, when he originally mentioned this subject in your house, was the departure from that system of arrangement and economy so strongly enforced in the reports of the commissioners of accounts. When he arraigned the measure, it was natural for him to wish to present to your lordships' view, and the public consideration, the consequences that ensued from it. It was in this point of view that my noble friend moved for the papers on your table, that you might see the fatal effects of the departure from those regulations, and of the contempt of those salutary restraints which the forms of parliament and the law of the land have placed on the public expenditure. But, when he saw the extent of the materials on the table of the house, he judged, and judged well, that to comprise the whole of the subject in the discussion of one day would have been inconsistent with that desire he had of exhibiting to the public, in

the clearest and most distinct point of view, topics so materially interesting to the welfare, perhaps to the existence, of the state. The division my noble friend adopted was that which naturally presented itself:—to discuss, in the first instance, the causes of our calamities; and, in the second, to exhibit the effects they have produced. As the more important consideration, he called your attention to the first of these subjects; I regret, for the sake of the public, that the partiality of my noble friend has placed the second in my hands. This arrangement however of the business was the course that prudence would have dictated to any man; and it must have more forcibly suggested itself to the noble marquis, who could not but recollect the pains and the attention which he, as well as the late Marquis of Rockingham, bestowed, at the close of the American war, on the means of preventing such abuses in future; who must have seen with astonishment, the total deviation from that solemn pledge which he, in conjunction with the present first lord of the Treasury, gave to the public in the speech which they put into the mouth of their sovereign in the year 1782*.

The topics my noble friend upon that day discussed before your lordships, though flippantly undervalued in the commencement of the speech given to the public by the noble baron †, were of the most grave and important nature. The neglect of the measure recommended by the commissioners of accounts; the total contempt of the Appropriation Act; the new institution of barracks; of a Secretary of State's Office; a Transport Board, and the additional appointments in every department; the unparalleled amount of extraordinaries in the army and navy, are subjects of such a nature, that to lessen their consequence in the public estimation, was an at-

* I must recommend to you an immediate attention to the great objects of the public receipts and expenditure, and above all, to the state of the public debt. Notwithstanding the great increase of it during the war, it is to be hoped such regulations may be still established, such savings made, and future loans so conducted, as to promote the means of its gradual redemption by a fixed course of payment. I must, with particular earnestness, distinguish for your serious consideration, that part of the debt which consists of navy, ordnance, and victualling bills: the enormous discount upon some of these bills shews this mode of payment to be a most ruinous expedient.

“I have ordered the several estimates, made up as correctly as the present practice admits, to be laid before you. I hope that such further corrections as may be necessary, will be made before the next year. It is my desire that you should be apprised of every expence before it is incurred, as far as the nature of each service can possibly admit. Matters of account can never be made too public.—*King's Speech*, December 5th, 1782.

† Lord Auckland.

tempt

tempt as bold as it will be inefficacious. But the noble lord, not choosing to meet my noble friend upon such an investigation, quarrels with certain expressions and opinions, which he feels it "a sacred duty incumbent on him to resist, as far as God has given him faculties." These opinions, however, I must observe, with all due respect for the faculties bestowed on him, it will be difficult for him to controvert. My noble friend stated, "that our trade was reduced to a dependance on the very warfare which is fundamentally destroying it; and that our resources were so exhausted, as to force us to the wretched expedient of reviving taxes which were a few years since repealed:"—propositions, which the noble baron did wisely to dismiss with epithets, rather than to contravert by argument.

It would indeed be difficult to overthrow opinions which must pervade the minds of the people, when they reflect that the war expenditure of last year * amounts to a sum almost equal to the total value of both the imports and exports of this country in the year 1787; and when they recollect, that since the commencement of the present war, taxes have been laid on commodities on which the duties had been lowered,

* WAR EXPENCE 1795.

NAVY.		
Estimate	-	£6,055,523
Navy debt incurred 1795, about	-	7,500,000
Received for the service of the navy from the vote of credit	-	171,373
Total Navy		£. 13,726,896

ARMY.		
Estimate	-	£. 8,610,390
Deduct Landgrave's debt	-	63,850
		8,541,540
Extraordinaries 1795	-	5,057,731
Received from vote of credit	-	2,200,000
Total Army		£. 15,799,271

ORDNANCE.		
Estimate	-	£. 1,456,804
Exceeding sea service 1795	-	102,421
Ditto land service 1795	-	762,046
Received from vote of credit	-	40,000
Total Ordnance		£. 2,341,271

Total Navy, Army, and Ordnance, £. 31,867,438.

The war expence 1795 was stated by Lord Grenville as not exceeding twenty-six or twenty-seven millions.—By Lord Auckland, loosely, at a much smaller sum.

to the extent of *one million nine hundred and fifty-two thousand pounds* *. Yet in the speech given to the public, with little more than a few exclamations of disgust at the opinions of my noble friend, is all that mass of important matter, detailed to you upon a former occasion, passed over without animadversion. I confess it excites my curiosity, to see whether the noble lord will this day as flippantly condemn, and as superficially investigate, the less important considerations which it falls to my lot to submit to you.

My lords, it is only when compared with the subject my noble friend brought before you, that, in speaking on the detail of our finances, I can think of using the term *less important*. For those who have considered how fatal to the interior policy of every government derangement in finance has proved; who recollect the conspicuous share which it had in producing the fall of the Roman empire; and who have seen its recent effects in the origin and progress of the French revolution, must sympathize with me in saying, that there is no subject I can consider more interesting, except the causes that have fatally produced the gloomy prospect which the unpleasant duty of this day will oblige me to display.

We in this house are accustomed to hear noble lords in office dilate upon a subject, which, on my conscience I believe, there is no one in this country but themselves who would think of introducing: I mean *the advantages this nation has acquired in the present war, and the successes that have attended our arms*. But, I believe, even amongst them, there is not one who will be disposed to compare our successes with those of the French in the war ending with the peace in 1783; yet the derangement of their finances (created in the moment of their greatest prosperity, exhibiting a *deficit* smaller than what I am afraid truth will compel me to state to your lordships as existing in this country) levelled a prouder nobility than that I have the honour to address, and a clergy in power and opulence far surpassing those I see before me. When we look back to those

* Taxes that have been laid on various articles during the war, on which the duties had been lowered for the sake of revenue during the last peace.

1794 Additional duty on Spirits	£. 243,000
1795 Ditto taken for	259,000
— Upon Tea 7l. 10 per cent.	180,000
— On Wine	500,000
1796 Tobacco	170,000
— Wine	600,000
	£. 1,952,000

times,

times, we derive also, from a recollection of the situation of this country, lessons that ought to be useful at the present moment. Was it the success of the French arms that reduced us almost to sue for peace to the enemy? No, my lords; there is no man who does not remember, that, to the credit and honour of our navy, at no period of our history were its successes more brilliant and glorious. The fatal and careless profusion in our expenditure, which distinguished that period, was in reality the sole cause of the humiliating situation of that day. Amongst the many who then loudly censured the extravagance and profuse expenditure, there was none who with more relentless and unforgiving rancour condemned the conduct of those who had occasioned it, than the present minister. From his affected purity, from the solemn pledges he had given in the report from the committee of the House of Commons on finance, of which he was a member, and in the speech made by his majesty in the year 1782, when he was a minister, we had reason to expect something more of caution and economy in the conduct of our expenditure. Unfortunately however for this country, the evils then complained of, and principally censured, have in this war been carried under his auspices to an extent unparralleled in the annals of that æra. The money voted by parliament on estimate in the last three years of the war with France, Spain, Holland, and America; but that expenditure, by means of votes of credit and extraordinary, so much censured as the cause of our difficulties, has been carried to a far greater and more alarming excess. In three years ending 1780, the total estimated expence of the army, navy, and ordnance amounted to the sum of twenty-seven millions one hundred and sixty thousand pounds. In the three years including 1795, the expence voted by estimate amounted to thirty-five millions five hundred and fourteen thousand pounds*. But the excess is proportionably much greater

* Money voted on Estimate in the years

1778-9-80.

1778.

Army	-	£. 3,432,096
Navy	-	4,001,895
Ordnance	-	382,816
		7,816,807

1779.

Army	-	4,013,185
Navy	-	4,589,069
Ordnance	-	395,439
		8,997,697

3 Y 2

Money on Estimate in 1793 4-5.

1793.

Army	-	£. 3,630,694
Navy	-	3,196,915
Ordnance	-	729,453
		7,557,062

1794.

Army	-	5,627,755
Navy	-	5,525,531
Ordnance	-	701,736
		11,854,822

Army

greater in the money expended without an estimate being previously submitted to parliament; for we have the mortification to see, that the total amount of uneffimated expence in the three years ending 1780, was nineteen millions one hundred and seventy-four thousand pounds; whereas in the three years ending 1795, it has arisen to the enormous sum of thirty-one millions three hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds, making an excess of upwards of twelve millions in this latter period, expended in the manner which was stated as so alarming, and which is considered by the best informed men who

1780.			1795.		
Army	-	4,384,693	Army	-	8,410,390
Navy	-	5,503,284	Navy	-	6,315,523
Ordnance	-	458,136	Ordnance	-	1,176,804
		<u>10,346,113</u>			<u>15,902,717</u>
Total 1778	-	7,816,807	Total 1793	-	7,757,062
— 1779	-	8,997,697	— 1794	-	11,854,822
— 1780	-	<u>10,346,113</u>	— 1795	-	<u>15,902,717</u>
		<u>£. 27,160,617</u>			<u>35,514,601</u>
Money without Estimate in 1778-9-80.			Money without Estimate in 1793-4-5.		
1778.			1793.		
Army	—	2,200,223	Army	—	£. 1,647,616
Navy	—	2,172,033	Navy	—	3,273,375
Ordnance	—	<u>521,936</u>	Ordnance	—	<u>701,281</u>
		<u>4,894,192</u>			<u>5,622,272</u>
1779.			1794.		
Army	—	3,026,137	Army	—	5,603,968
Navy	—	3,182,271	Navy	—	3,590,232
Ordnance	—	<u>501,466</u>	Ordnance	—	<u>1,291,348</u>
		<u>6,799,874</u>			<u>10,485,548</u>
1780.			1795.		
Army	—	3,418,806	Army	—	7,257,730
Navy	—	3,514,750	Navy	—	7,008,940
Ordnance	—	<u>547,182</u>	Ordnance	—	<u>1,012,240</u>
		<u>7,480,738</u>			<u>15,278,910</u>
Total 1778	—	4,894,192	Total 1793	—	5,622,272
— 1779	—	6,799,874	— 1794	—	10,485,548
— 1780	—	<u>7,480,738</u>	— 1795	—	<u>15,278,910</u>
		<u>19,174,804</u>			<u>£. 31,386,730</u>

have

have treated upon the subject, as so destructive of all parliamentary controul and constitutional principles. *

The consequences have been such as we might naturally expect. In proportion as the neglect of forms and the relaxation from the regular parliamentary mode of providing for the public expenditure have increased, the enormous expence of the war, in which we have been involved, has augmented: the expences of the American war up to the year 1781 amounted to the sum of fifty-three millions; but we have now to regret, that in the prosecution of the present we have already created an addition to our funded debt of ninety-three millions, and loaded the people of this country, oppressed with taxation, with the additional sum of four millions five hundred thousand pounds annually.†

* Extracts from the report of the Committee of the House of Commons 1782, of which Mr. Pitt was a member:

"Your committee cannot help observing, that the enormous amount of extraordinary in the foregoing account, incurred without the consent of parliament, is an abuse of the most alarming nature, enabling ministers to deceive the nation, by keeping back the great expence of the war, and concealing thereby the extent of its engagements. It has been stated by parliament, when the object was inconsiderable to what it was at present, as a dangerous invasion of the rights, and little differing from levying money without the consent of parliament. The debt is not only incurred, but paid also, by the sole authority of the minister, and that too out of money appropriated to other services, leaving no option to the House when the account comes before them."

Extract from Hatfel's Precedents of Proceedings in the House of Commons, Title *Supply*.

"There was a degree of negligence or extravagance, or both, in those who had the conduct of the war department, which rendered all the votes of the House of Commons, or bills for appropriating the supplies, ridiculous and nugatory. The sums demanded upon the head of Extraordinaries of the army incurred and not provided for, during this period, fell not very much short of the whole sum voted by parliament upon estimate for that service; nay, in the year 1782 they appear to have actually exceeded them. This was such a shameful prostitution of the money of the public, that, though perhaps the distance, and magnitude, and nature of the American war might be pleaded as some alleviation and excuse for the generals abroad who commanded, or for the ministers at home, who ought to have controuled these commanders, nothing can justify the House of Commons who permitted this practice to continue uninterrupted through several sessions; and whose more immediate duty it was to have examined into the contracts and other services pretended to have been performed, and to have pointed out and punished those frauds and abuses which were afterwards with no great difficulty detected by the commissioners of public accounts."

† AMOUNT OF THE TAXES WHICH HAVE BEEN LAID UPON THE PEOPLE DURING THE COURSE OF THE PRESENT WAR.

Budget	1793	—	287,000l.
—	1794	—	911,000l.
—	1795	—	1,644,000l.
— Dec.	1795	—	938,000l.
— April	1796	—	740,000l.
			4,520,000l.

Under

Under these circumstances it was with astonishment I heard detailed to your lordships, with surprise I have seen handed to an oppressed people, a consoling statement of certain public circumstances in the years 1795-6, when compared with the years 1783-4. On the fairness of the selection of the year 1783 for such a comparison I shall have much to say to your lordships: at present I shall only remark, that whether fair or unfair, it was admirably suited to the convenience of the noble lord who made the statement. Had he selected any of the years during the last war, we should have been able to have quoted his own authority for the flourishing situation of the finance at that time, (notwithstanding the calamitous state to which we know our revenue was soon reduced,) and to have contrasted it with the opinions he holds on the state of the finance at present. In the year 1789 the noble lord taught us to believe, "that the rise in the excise and customs, evincing the extent of home consumption, implied an increasing produce and a quick circulation; and that every known criterion as well as every external appearance concurred in proving the quantity of money within the country to be unusually great."† In the year 1783, however, the noble lord passed a transient moment with us in opposition; and the impression under which his notes of that day were formed, whilst it renders them convenient for his present purpose, will perhaps account for the sort of statement he has produced. For though the noble lord declares "that it was not his wish, even if he had power to accomplish it, to lead you or the public into opinions of the situation of the country more favourable than the truth would justify;" I must assert that a statement more strained in its terms, more calculated to deceive by its result, never was exhibited upon any occasion.

He begins by calling your lordships attention to a comparison of the price of three per cent. consols at these two periods. Perhaps it may occur to you, that as he selected the 2d of May 1796, he might have looked at the price of stocks on the 2d of May 1783, before he proceeded to state the price of 3 per cents. January 1784. Perhaps you may with me think, that in the beginning of this comparative statement he might have at least suggested, that in May 1783 the price of 3 per cents. actually was 68. But I am sure you will agree with me in thinking, that in contrasting the price of India stock at these two periods, he exhibits to us consistency, and displays a continuation of the same disposition to fairness, in totally neglecting to state, that in May 1783 the price of India stock was 138;

† See Lord Auckland's letter to Lord Carlisle.

and that the East-India company, authorised by parliament, and enabled by the sums of money called in from the proprietors, have since that period increased their dividend two and one-quarter per cent. So that, if the increase arising from the additional dividend was taken from the present price of the stock, it would leave it on the 2d of May 1796 somewhere about 168; and instead of exhibiting an account of India stock 1784, at 121, and in May 1796 at 209, he must have suggested that the price of India stock was 138, and that, independent of the augmentation of dividend, it could not be fairly stated in May 1796 at more than 168.

The noble lord next proceeds to state to you the increase of exports and imports that has of late years taken place. I know it is a favourite doctrine to build conclusions on the state of our commerce and revenue upon this ground; but I much doubt the solidity of them. Without commenting on the known and avowed inaccuracy with which these accounts, more particularly that of our exports, are formed, there is much in the present circumstances of the country, and in the reduced trade of our enemy, that leads me to think it a temporary and not a permanent augmentation; and there is no person who has considered with accuracy the public accounts before you, who can think that it proves any thing with regard to the probable state of the revenue. The total value of the exports and imports in 1795 exceeds the total value of the exports and imports in 1791 by seven millions; but instead of finding that there has arisen from this any increase of revenue, the taxes existing in 1791 have fallen short in 1795 to the extent of upwards of eight hundred thousand pounds.

With regard to the cotton wool, the importation of which has so much increased, one would have imagined that, in this instance at least, the fact might have satisfied the noble lord: but instead of five millions of pounds, which he states to be the annual importation for five years, I think I can say from some authority, that the importation in 1783 was seven millions eight hundred thousand pounds; and that the average importation of the five preceding years exceeded considerably seven millions of pounds.

On the noble lord's statement of the exports of British merchandize to India, I have only to say, that if I recollect right, the exports of merchandize 1795-6 were computed at one million one hundred thousand, instead of two millions two hundred thousand pounds. I must also on the subject of the East India revenues quote the right honourable gentleman at the head of the board of controul, in opposition to the noble lord.

By

By him the net produce of India revenue was estimated in the year 1795 at one million four hundred thousand pounds; though the noble lord, with a systematic perseverance in that fairness with which his comparative statement is formed, estimates it at two millions six hundred thousand pounds. Without entering, however, into minute details of the affairs of the East India company, to which I certainly have paid no great attention, let me only suggest to the noble lord, and to the public, that the improvement made in the stock, per computation, amounts since the year 1783, as appears by the papers before parliament, to the sum of two millions seven hundred and sixty-five thousand pounds: the receipt of the company from the proprietors during that period is nearly five millions †: a circumstance which gives no very favourable impression of the great improvement in the affairs of the East India company since the year 1783.

The next subject to which the noble lord has adverted, is a comparison of the amount of the permanent taxes on a three years average to the fifth of January 1784, with what he calls the amount of the same taxes after making *all allowances for the intermediate changes and arrangements of the revenue* on a three years average to the 5th of January 1785. The former he states to be nine millions eight hundred and seventy six thousand pounds; the latter, twelve millions three hundred and eighty-one thousand pounds. I should have conceived that, if in other respects this species of comparison had been unexceptionable, it might have occurred to the noble lord that the public could see no great cause of triumph in the revenue of the country producing something more in the three first years of this war, with all the improvements in our manufactures, than it did in a period of three years when we were reduced by six years war, the most general in which this country was ever engaged, and before the tide of commercial transactions could have resumed its wonted channels.

† Stock per computation 1786—Balance in favour of the company		6,734,264l.
Ditto	1783—Ditto	— 3,968,481l.
Increased balance in favour of the company		— 2,765,783l.
Received by the company in 1788 on an increased capital of 800,000l. at 195 per cent.		1,240,000l.
Ditto—1789 on ditto 1,000,000l. at 170 per cent.	—	1,700,000l.
Ditto—1793 on ditto 1,000,000l. at 200 per cent.	—	2,000,000l.
		4,940,000l.
From that take 2,765,783l. the increased balance as above		— 2,174,217l.
		But

But it requires little examination indeed to discover, that this article in the noble lord's comparative view of circumstances, is framed in the spirit which animated him in forming for your lordships' information those on which I have already had occasion to comment.

The existing taxes before the American war, on an average of nine years to Michaelmas 1782 *, produced eight millions one hundred and forty-four thousand pounds. In the year ending Michaelmas 1782, the produce of the same taxes was seven millions eight hundred and ninety-seven thousand pounds; and in one year ending Michaelmas 1783, they produced only six millions nine hundred and thirty-three thousand pounds. Thus, in the commencement of the three years with such impartiality selected for this comparison, we find that the produce of the old taxes had decreased two hundred and forty-six thousand pounds below their produce on an average of the nine antecedent years. And towards the conclusion of these favourite three years the produce of the same taxes fell short one million two hundred and ten thousand pounds. In one respect I think it was inconsistent with the noble lord's circumspection and prudence to call your attention to the produce of the taxes at this particular period. For when the public recollect, that this great diminution of upwards of one million in the produce of the revenue happened immediately on the conclusion of the last peace, perhaps they may anticipate with some degree of dread what will be the probable situation of our revenue, when the prejudices of our ministers can be so far subdued as to engage them to restore peace to this exhausted country. Before I quit this article, I must also observe to your lordships, that the noble lord ought, for your satisfaction and that of the public, to have given some explanation in what manner these allowances were made for intermediate charges and arrangements in the revenue, which he had in his contemplation when he states the produce of the taxes existing in 1784 to amount in three years ending January 1785 to upwards of twelve millions. I am disposed to press this the more, because I believe that if proper allowances are made for the excise on wines in 1786, and the consolidating the customs in 1787, for the increase on home and British spirits, in carrying into effect the treaty with France, farming the post-horse tax, excise on tobacco, diminution on the charges of management at the bank and south sea house, together with the effects of the smuggling act, the commutation and manifest act, it will be

* See Dr. Price's Postscript to his State of the Public Debt 1783.

difficult, or rather impossible, to defend the statement he has made.

The next consoling circumstance which we are called to contemplate is the navy debt in December 1783, and on the second of May 1796. The first is stated by the noble lord to be fifteen millions five hundred thousand pounds; the last, two millions three hundred thousand pounds. How this sum is obtained, or can be fairly stated as the existing navy debt, I confess myself at a loss to discover. The sum left unprovided for on December 31st, 1795, is equal to the existing navy debt in December 1792, which I think I recollect was somewhere about two millions seven hundred thousand pounds. The bills registered on the course of the navy, between the 31st of December 1795 and the 31st of March 1796, as appears from the papers on your lordships' table, amount to the sum of two millions eight hundred thousand pounds †. But if the noble lord, instead of selecting the second of May 1796, had made the comparison between the navy debt outstanding December 1783 and December 1795, it would have presented to your lordships' eye, and that of the public, a very different account. You would have seen that, if at the former period it was fifteen millions five hundred thousand pounds, it amounted at the latter to thirteen millions eight hundred thousand pounds; and if he had chosen by anticipation to have given your lordships a view of what may be the probable state of the navy debt in December 1796, if it increases in the same proportion in which it appears to have increased by the papers before you during the first three months of the present year *, it will then, together with what was left unprovided for at the end of last year, amount to the sum of thirteen millions nine hundred thousand pounds. Indeed the noble lord must himself know, that in selecting the second of May 1796, he has chosen almost the

day

† Navy debt left unprovided 31st of December 1795	—	2,745,991l.
Navy Bills registered before the 31st of March 1796	—	2,822,389l.
Total		5,568,380l.

* Navy office, 22d April, 1796.
An account of Navy, Victualling, and Transport Bills registered since 31st December, 1795.

Navy Bills	—	—	1,017,230l. 12s. 8d.
Victualling Bills	—	—	1,049,395l. 11s. 6d.
Transport Bills	—	—	755,763l. 10s. 4d.
Total			2,822,389l. 14s. 6d.

Examined R. P.

A. S. Hammond, Wm. Rule, Geo. Marsh, Geo. Rogers, W. Palmer, W. Bellingham.

day of the year the most favourable for this strange comparative account of the navy debt which he has exhibited.

In the comparison the noble lord has made of the bank advances to the public, afraid lest in any one instance the year 1783 should have the advantage, however inconsiderable, of the year 1796, he has provided himself with a private account of the amount of advances May 2d 1796; for if he had confined himself to the various documents before parliament on this subject, he would have been obliged to have stated to you that the advances made by the bank amounted on the 12th of September 1795 to the sum of eleven millions eight hundred thousand pounds; on the 9th of December 1795 to the sum of twelve millions two hundred thousand pounds; and on the 31st of December to the sum of eleven millions six hundred thousand pounds: in every instance exceeding the amount of the advance in 1783. In stating the advances of the bank in the year 1783, the noble lord has not explained whether he included the navy bills at that time in possession of the bank. If he did, your lordships will easily see that, to make the comparison with any degree of fairness, there must be a further sum added to the balances in 1795 equal to the amount of the value of navy bills at that time in the possession of the bank.

My Lords, the next article in this account exceeds every thing on which I have hitherto had occasion to remark: it is to me as unintelligible as it is impossible for me to comprehend how any man can presume to come forward with such a statement to your lordships or the public. The unfunded debt is represented as amounting in January 1794 to twenty-seven millions—May 2d 1796 it is stated as nothing. What then has become of the balance of eleven millions due to the bank, which the noble lord has antecedently stated to you? Has he totally forgotten, or can he expect that you will forget, that after all his strained ingenuity in frittering down the existing navy debt, he has confessed that the sum due May 2d 1796, is two millions three hundred thousand pounds? But let me once more entreat your lordships attention to a plain statement of what would have been the shape of this account, if the noble lord had selected for his comparison the same month in 1796 he had chosen in 1784. In January 1796 the articles of navy debt, bank advances, arrears due to the army, and the deficiency of the consolidated fund, as appears from the accounts on your table, alone amount to twenty-seven millions five

hundred thousand pounds;* exceeding by five hundred thousand pounds the total of the out-standing unfunded debt in January 1784; which your lordships will permit me to remind you was after the conclusion of a six years war of notorious and reprobated extravagance.

The sinking fund is the next object to which your attention is called. In 1783 you are told there was no sinking fund; in 1796 you are informed it amounted to two millions five hundred thousand pounds. If at either period a sinking fund is talked of to hold out any idea of surplus, it can only tend to deceive. In 1783 there was a thing called a sinking fund, and in 1796 there is a thing called a sinking fund; but in reality, instead of possessing any surplus in the former year, there was a loan of twelve millions; in the latter, two loans amounting to twenty-five millions five hundred thousand pounds. And allow me in passing to remark to your lordships, that notwithstanding the vaunting statement which has been made to the public of the low rate of interest at which money was this year borrowed; as far as I can judge from a cursory view of the budget in 1783, the public was loaded with a smaller permanent interest for the twelve millions borrowed by Lord John Cavendish, than for the first loan negotiated this year—though in this latter period taxes were also imposed for the purpose of providing a sinking fund, of one shilling and sixpence for every hundred pounds borrowed.

I now come to the concluding and undoubtedly the most important article in this comparison. The noble lord states “the amount of revenue (including the land and malt) *below* “the computed expenditure on a peace establishment of fifteen “millions in 1783 at two millions. And the amount of revenue (including the land and malt) *above* the computed “expenditure on a similar peace establishment, with the addition of increased charges for the debt incurred by the present war, 1795, three millions four hundred thousand pounds.” This statement derives its importance not so much from the comparison it exhibits, as from the fact it advances, that if we were fortunate enough now to experience the blessings of peace, there would be an actual surplus of three millions four

* Bank Advance,	December 1795	—	12,275,386l.
Navy Debt,	December 1795	—	13,000,000l.
Arrears due to the Army,	January 1, 1796	—	1,065,576l.
Deficiency of the consolidated fund		—	1,200,000l.

Total 27,540,962l.

hundred

hundred thousand pounds. Before however I proceed to exhibit the fallacy which this holds forth, I must detain your lordships by remarking on the form of the proposition and on the nature of the premises. I am disposed to censure the form of the proposition, because it holds out to you, for the first time since the sinking fund has been established, that its produce is to be deemed a surplus disposable like any other surplus at the will of parliament; instead of considering it, as it hitherto has been, and, I trust, for the welfare and the credit of this country, ever will be treated, as forming as much a part of our necessary expenditure as the navy, army, or ordnance. With the premises upon which this proposition proceeds I cannot agree; for I can conceive nothing more calculated to delude, than to state to this country that there exists a possibility of our peace expenditure amounting to so small a sum as fifteen millions. The noble lord must know that the committee of the House of Commons, in the year 1786, reported that the peace establishment, including the sinking fund, would be fifteen millions four hundred and seventy-eight thousand pounds; and the committee saw no prospect of the affairs of the country being in such a situation as to get upon this peace establishment till the year 1791, that is, the eighth year after the conclusion of the late war. But when the year 1791 arrived, the noble lord knows that another committee of the House of Commons declared they did not conceive a possibility of forming a peace establishment that should cost less than about sixteen millions annually; and that instead of foretelling the period, as the former committee had done, when the country could confine its expenditure within so narrow bounds, they did not even pretend to foresee the time when our expences could be so far diminished. When the noble lord states fifteen millions to you as your probable peace establishment, he knows also, or he ought to know, that the average annual amount of our expence from the year 1786 to the year 1791, as stated in the report of the House of Commons, was sixteen millions eight hundred and sixteen thousand nine hundred and eighty-five pounds; and that in reality I might state it at a much larger sum without fear of contradiction.* Yet in the face of all

* NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

Civil List, Interest of National Debt, and Million for purchase of

		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Stock, 5th Jan.	} Interest Civil List, &c. ¼ of million Carried forward	9	277,407	16	1½		
1786, to 5th Jan. 1787			966,983	4	3½		
			750,000	0	0		
						10,994,391	0 5½
							Brought

all these facts, without any wish, as he states,* to lead you into opinions more favourable than the truth will justify, the noble lord holds out the prospect of your entering on an immediate peace establishment of fifteen millions, at a time too when he must see with certainty that the increased half-pay of the army and navy, the expences incident to barracks, the various new profuse arrangements in all the departments, the establishment of a third Secretary of State, instituted for the purpose of accommodating one noble lord, and telegraphs erected with a permanent establishment for the amusement of another noble lord, must occasion an additional expenditure of at least five hundred thousand pounds annually.

Brought forward		-	10,994,391	0	5½
Ditto, 5th Jan. 1787, to 5th of Jan. 1788	Interest	9,276,661	5	11½	
	Civil List, &c.	990,088	0	4½	
	Million	1,000,000	0	0	
			11,266,749	6	4
Ditto, 5th Jan. 1788, to 5th Jan. 1789	Interest	9,276,221	16	2½	
	Civil List, &c.	1,001,759	0	2½	
	Million	1,000,000	0	0	
			11,277,980	16	5½
Ditto, 5th Jan. 1789, to 5th Jan. 1790	Interest	9,283,108	0	3½	
	Civil List, &c.	1,009,573	11	8	
	Million	1,000,000	0	0	
			11,292,681	11	11½
Ditto, 5th Jan. 1790, to 5th Jan. 1791	Interest	9,289,625	7	2½	
	Civil List, &c.	1,007,385	16	6½	
	Million	1,000,000	0	0	
			11,297,011	3	8½
Interest on Tontine and Long Annuities		-	42,862	0	0
			55,171,675	18	11
Interest on 5,500,000l. Exchequer Bills	1786	—	223,455	2	11
	1787	—	145,786	8	4
	1788	—	181,419	6	7½
	1789	—	186,714	14	2½
	1790	—	176,768	13	7
			914,144	5	8
			57,085,820	4	7
Navy, army, ordnance, and miscellaneous services from 1st Jan. to 31st Dec.	1786	—	5,522,176	17	11
	1787	—	4,683,420	15	7½
	1788	—	5,389,756	13	2½
	1789	—	5,302,441	3	10½
	1790	—	5,340,383	3	9½
			26,238,178	14	5½
			83,323,998	19	0½
Deficiency of grants in					
1785 made good in	1786	—	127,138	3	2½
Ditto voted into sinking fund	1786	—	1,285,064	18	3½
Ditto, ditto	1787	—	1,435,392	15	4½
Ditto, consolidated fund	1788	—	578,732	14	7½
			3,426,328	11	6
Ditto, mint	1786 and 1787	—	17,000	12	6
			£. 86,767,328	3	0½
Average expenditure for five years			17,353,465l.		

* See printed Speech, page 18.

Having

Having stated to your lordships my objection to the premises, on which is founded the assertion, that there will exist in the event of an immediate peace a surplus of three millions four hundred thousand pounds; I must now beg to call your attention to the explanation given of the conclusion which has been drawn. I lament indeed, when a noble lord* on a former day stated to this House the grounds he had for not agreeing in thinking that there could possibly exist such a surplus, that the unfortunate absence of the noble baron † deprived me of an opportunity of hearing his explanation. I have however to rejoice that I heard the explanation of the secretary of state ‡, authorized by him to deliver it, as well as that of another noble lord, whose character for knowledge on these points made it more particularly interesting §.

To the noble secretary of state I will recapitulate the explanation he then gave on the subject of the surplus stated by the noble lord:—Instead of estimating the future produce of the taxes by the actual receipt of this year, he chose to take an average of the three years ending the 5th of January, 1796: to this, which amounts to thirteen millions five hundred and forty-two thousand three hundred and three pounds*, he added one hundred and twenty-eight thousand pounds, the produce of the old tax on bills and receipts included in the papers on your table during all the three years, in the receipt of the new duties; and twenty-three thousand three hundred and thirty-three pounds, the third of seventy thousand pounds, the amount of the old paper duty, included in the statement before you in the new taxes of last year; and forty thousand, the third of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds paid last year as bounties to seamen, which, though undoubtedly received at the Custom-House, does not appear in the gross receipt on your table. This, together with thirty-two thousand pounds,

*Lord Moira. † Lord Auckland. ‡ Lord Grenville. § Lord Hawkesbury.

* Receipt of permanent taxes for three years, to January 1796.

1794	£.13,813,290	} Average of three years	£. 13,542,303
1795	13,674,892		
1796	13,138,727		

To this add duties on bills and receipts included in new taxes during all these three years	_____	128,000
A third of old paper duties, and of bounties paid to seamen out of the customs during the last year	_____	63,000
Share of a 53d week	_____	32,000
Land and malt, as estimated by the committee	_____	2,558,000
Estimated produce of a lottery	_____	250,000
Sum expected from the East-India Company	_____	500,000
		£.17,072,000
		the

the share of the fifty-third week, he stated as amounting to thirteen millions seven hundred and sixty-four or five thousand pounds: to this the noble lord added two millions five hundred and fifty-eight thousand pounds, the produce of the land and malt tax, as estimated by the committee of the House of Commons; he also took into his account two hundred and fifty thousand, the estimated produce of an annual lottery, and five hundred thousand, annually expected from the East-India Company: which makes in all the sum of seventeen millions and seventy-two thousand pounds; presenting to your lordships an excess of upwards of two millions above the supposed peace establishment, and forming, with the interest of nineteen millions, the sum already purchased by the sinking fund, together with the new sinking fund established during the war, the boasted surplus of three millions four hundred thousand pounds. Now, my lords, I must beg your indulgence in offering a few observations on the propriety of the noble lord's adopting an average of the three last years, for the purpose of computing the probable receipt of the ensuing year. Averages, in forming all calculations, ought alone to be resorted to when, from casual fluctuations, the revenue to be ascertained is sometimes diminishing and sometimes increasing; but when from a permanent cause you see an uniform and gradual diminution, no inference from an average produce of past years can lead to a just conclusion concerning the receipt of the future. Yet the papers on your table not only prove that the revenue has fallen off from year to year, but even from quarter to quarter; as the total amount of the revenue for the last year, made up to the 5th of January, exceeds by nearly a hundred thousand pounds the produce of the year ending the 5th of April. Rejecting therefore this appeal to averages, I must submit to your lordships, that when we perceive this gradual and constant diminution, the more accurate mode of estimating the produce of a future year would be to suppose, that as the same cause exists, a diminution may probably take place in the next year proportionable to that which took place in the last. Calculated on this principle, the total receipt of the old taxes will only amount to twelve millions six hundred and twenty-three thousand five hundred and eighty-three pounds; to which if you add the share of the 53d week, the various sums arising from old duties included in the new taxes in the statement now on the table, and the bounties paid to seamen out of the customs, the probable produce of the revenue, including the land and malt, as estimated by the committee, will be fifteen millions five hundred and thirty-one thousand five hundred and eighty-

eighty-three pounds* ; and this, my lords, is the total of what I think I can fairly state to the public, independent of the new taxes, as applicable to the future peace expenditure: For I cannot lay aside all regard to the morals of the lower class of people in this metropolis so much, as to look forward to a permanent annual lottery ; and I cannot forget what past experience has taught me, so far as to build with any degree of certainty on the receipt of that five hundred thousand pounds from the East India Company, which has never been received but once, and which the minister at the head of the board of controul annually tells you it would be imprudent in the highest degree to demand.

In offering to your lordships my conjectures concerning our future expences, I must remind you that I have already stated my reasons for thinking it absurd to speak of fifteen millions as our probable expenditure if the blessings of peace were restored to us, and the grounds on which I conceive that the lowest estimate I can with justice make of our last peace establishment is not what the committees fancied it would be, but what it actually proved to be on an average of five years, sixteen millions eight hundred and sixteen thousand pounds†. In estimating however our future expenditure, we must add the sum of two hundred thousand pounds annually voted for the sinking fund, and a sum of at least five hundred thousand pounds additional peace establishment, which the increased half-pay of the army, and all the various new establishments I

* Total receipt of the taxes, if the diminution in consequence of the war is as great during the present year as it was during the last	—	—	—	£. 12,623,583
To which may be added a share of the 53d week	—	—	—	32,000
Included in the new taxes what was formerly produced by taxes on bills and receipts	—	—	—	128,000
Old duties on paper, included in the new taxes	—	—	—	70,000
Bounties paid to seamen out of the customs	—	—	—	120,000
Land and malt as estimated by the committee	—	—	—	2,558,000
Total probable receipt of revenue, exclusive of the taxes laid on during the war	—	—	—	£. 15,531,583

† Total expence incurred in 5 years under the heads of Interest, Charges of the National Debt—Interest of Exchequer Bills—Civil List—Charges on the Aggregate and Consolidated Funds—Navy—Army—Ordnance—Militia—Miscellaneous Services—Appropriated Duties and Annual Payment to the Sinking Fund.

For the year 1786,	—	£. 16,720,543	Average £. 16,816,985.
1787,	—	16,620,783	
1788,	—	16,800,796	
1789,	—	17,030,204	
1790,	—	16,912,597	

have enumerated, must render absolutely necessary. Your lordships will then perceive, upon the supposition that the new taxes produce a sufficiency to defray the expence for which they were imposed, the annual peace expenditure being seventeen millions five hundred thousand pounds, and the annual receipt only fifteen millions five hundred thousand pounds, there will be a deficiency of two millions. But I am convinced that many of your lordships must have examined the papers on your table too carefully not to discover, that there is in reality a large deficiency in the produce of the new taxes. When laid on, they were estimated to produce two millions eight hundred and forty-two thousand pounds; and on a cursory examination you may imagine, from the papers before you, that they have actually produced rather more than that sum. I am certain however, that with a view to ascertain the fair annual produce of the new taxes, you will agree with me in thinking that we must take from the sum stated in the account, three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, the duties received on the stock of wine in the hands of the trader; a hundred and twenty-eight thousand pounds, the produce of the old taxes on bills and receipts, now included in the new duties; and seventy thousand pounds, the produce of the old paper duties, which are in the same situation. Your lordships will then see that there is a deficiency in the new taxes exceeding five hundred thousand pounds; which added to the two millions makes in all a probable deficiency of two millions five hundred thousand pounds. This must be provided for, could we suppose that we have already borrowed a sufficiency, if peace should be restored in the course of a few months, to discharge the necessary expence in winding up the concerns of the war; but I am afraid there is no reason to indulge such a hope. I am convinced that your lordships must on the contrary think that I mention a sum far inferior to what will in reality be required, when I state the probability of ten millions more being found necessary: I am sure there is no man who examines the papers on your table, and sees that you have spent in the first quarter of this year for the service of the army the sum of eight millions two hundred thousand pounds, and that you have contracted navy debt to the extent of two millions eight hundred thousand pounds, who will hesitate in pronouncing that a much larger sum than ten millions will be required. This however, if borrowed at the same interest with the loans of this year, will create a further deficiency of upwards of six hundred thousand pounds: making in all a deficiency to the alarming extent of three millions one hundred and nineteen thousand pounds. Large as this sum may appear, I wish I could

could even stop here; but when I know that the expence of the war last year exceeded the sum of thirty-one millions, and that it is impossible, in a country where every species of property is so largely taxed, that money can be expended without contributing to the revenue, I must call your attention to the probable effect on the revenue of withdrawing the war expenditure. I know this idea has been attempted to be ridiculed; but till some of your lordships will deign to shew the possibility of the smallest expenditure taking place in this country without augmenting the revenue, I must continue to believe that a very large sum, even of the present diminished receipt, arises from the expences occasioned by the war, and that a formidable diminution must take place when it is withdrawn. Is this all theory and speculation? Or are there not practical proofs of the truth of what I assert? I can hardly suppose the noble lord selected the year 1783, to compare against the year 1796, rather than the year 1781-2, or any of the antecedent years of warfare, without examination. He I doubt not had discovered that the taxes fell, on withdrawing the expenditure of the American war, far above a million annually; yet the war expenditure never then much exceeded twenty millions; at present it considerably exceeds thirty millions: the permanent taxes were then little more than ten millions; at present they are much above fifteen. Should the revenue now diminish in proportion to the excess of the expenditure and the excess of the permanent taxes, as there is but too much reason to apprehend it will, this would create a further deficiency of upwards of two millions five hundred thousand pounds. But if it only amounted to the sum of fifteen hundred thousand pounds; that, together with the sums I have already stated, will create a deficiency of no less than four millions six hundred thousand pounds: an alarming prospect of the situation of the country, but such as I cannot help thinking is authorised by reason and supported by proof, and such as I am not afraid to submit to your lordships and to the public. If unfortunately the present calamitous contest be protracted for another year, it must make a melancholy addition to this statement: we shall then be under the necessity of providing for a sum equal to the war expenditure of the preceding year, which must occasion a farther addition to the burthens of the people of this country of nearly two millions.

Though I have felt it my duty, my lords, to make this statement to your lordships, which I am afraid neither you nor the public can reasonably pronounce exaggerated; yet, in the resolutions I shall have the honour to submit to this house, I

do not mean to propose to you any thing that can be deemed of an hypothetical or speculative nature, however just I may consider the grounds for such speculation. Most of the resolutions only recite facts upon which there can be no difference of opinion. The noble lords and I cannot differ about the amount of the debt contracted during the present war. Concerning the extent of the sum voted exclusive of the civil list, or the amount of the permanent taxes which the present war has rendered it necessary to levy, there can be no dispute.—I am persuaded that all must agree in supposing a loan of ten millions will be necessary, over and above what is already provided for winding up the enormous expences of the war. I believe your lordships, on an examination of the accounts upon your table, will find reason to apprehend that a much larger sum will be necessary. Your lordships and the public know, that you are in the annual habit of passing a bill for two hundred thousand pounds to the sinking fund, for which there is no provision; and I scarcely expect, after the details which have been submitted to you, that there is any person who will dispute the necessity we shall be under of an increased peace expenditure to the extent of five hundred thousand. The average annual expenditure of five years, as stated in the resolutions, cannot be contradicted: it is taken from the report of the committee of the House of Commons in 1791.

But if these facts are clear and indisputable, the inferences drawn in the resolutions are such as I am convinced your lordships cannot with propriety reject; for in calculating the probable amount of the revenue you will perceive that I have estimated the produce of the taxes in the most favourable mode that could possibly be adopted; that I have even gone the length of supposing, notwithstanding the immense diminution in our productive capital which the expences of the war must have created, that the taxes may produce upon the return of peace a sum equal to their average produce for four years to 1793; and that I admit that the new taxes of this year will produce the sum at which they have been estimated. Yet even in this most favourable mode of considering the subject, the conclusion is still inevitable, that there will be a deficiency of one million nine hundred and forty-three thousand five hundred and seventy pounds*.

I have

* RECEIPT.

Produce of the taxes ending
5 April 1796, deducting
the occasional payment
for wine, and adding a

EXPENDITURE.

Establishment during the
last peace on an average
of five years ending 5
January 1791 16,816,984l.
quarter's

I have stated in the resolutions the expected produce from the lottery, and the five hundred thousand pounds which it is supposed we shall receive from the East-India company: but as I cannot myself build my conclusions either upon such mischievous or fanciful sources of revenue, I leave it for those of your lordships who have so far lost all regard for the morals of the people as to think of a permanent lottery, or who, in defiance of past experience, are still so sanguine as to fancy that five hundred thousand pounds will be received from the East-India company, to draw the inference which the receipt of those sums would justify. Let me however remark, that even on the supposition that the taxes would produce a sum equal to the average of their produce during the last four years of peace; that the new taxes should produce to the extent of the sum for which they were given; that the East-India company should pay the five hundred thousand pounds that is expected; and that the lottery should be adopted as a permanent source of revenue; there will be a deficiency of upwards of one million, instead of a surplus of three millions four hundred thousand pounds which has been talked of to the public.

My lords, I am perfectly sensible, that in discussing the state of our revenue before your lordships I subject myself to much calumny. I know there are those who will assert that such statements can only serve as an encouragement to our enemies, who will consider it as likely to promote in them an inclination to continue this unfortunate war, or to insist upon unreasonable conditions of peace. To prevent the calumnies of the malicious is impossible; but I should be sorry indeed not to feel satisfied in my own mind that the source of every insinuation of this description must be evident. Can we really suppose, if the situation of our revenue was even more desperate than the circumstances of the case have authorized me to state

to

quarter's receipt on the taxes collected only during three quarters	15,603,285l.	Sum annually voted to the sinking fund —	200,000l.
Improvement supposed to take place on the return of peace, if the old taxes produce as much as they did on an average of four years antecedent to the war. —	757,480l.	Interest on a loan of 10,000,000l.	600,000l.
Estimated produce of the taxes of the present session	1,678,000l.	Additional peace establishment —	500,000l.
Land and malt as estimated by the committee	2,558,000l.	Interest payable on the money borrowed during the war	4,423,451l.
	20,596,765l.		22,540,335l.

to your lordships, that our enemies would from thence conclude our exertions were likely to be diminished in war? No, my lords, the French of all nations are the last who can think that derangement of finance can impede exertion against external enemies: they must have benefitted little indeed by the experience of their own situation for the last three years, if they can flatter themselves that derangement or even the ruin of successive systems of finance can check the exertions of a country against its enemies. Whilst I have therefore the happiness to think that by such investigations I can do no injury, I have the satisfaction to feel, that by laying open the situation of the finances of the country I have the prospect of doing much good. For if in this age we have learnt that derangement of finance constitutes no impediment to the exertions a nation may display against its enemies, we have had awful experience of the fatal effects attending it on the interior government of a country. It is to the public, who are in possession of this knowledge, I wish, through the statement I have made, to appeal; for, from the minister I expect nothing. He indeed has had the direction of the revenue at a time when he might have done more honour to himself, and entailed more important benefits on his country, than any man ever had an opportunity of doing. But who can reflect upon the management of the finances of this nation without regretting the infallible evidence of incapacity it exhibits—without feeling for the ill-placed pusillanimity that prevented some of those taxes which the war has rendered necessary from being brought forward at the commencement of the last peace—a measure that would have insured to the country all the benefits it must have derived from adopting those improved plans for liquidating the national debt submitted to the government by the late Dr. Price. But the timidity that prevented the imposition of taxes for the beneficial purposes of extinguishing the debt, has totally vanished when the mischievous expences of warfare are to be provided for. Annual additions have been made to that sinking fund which it was thought formerly impracticable to augment; leaving us but too just reason to conclude, that however the public may look forward to it as affording the only probable prospect of future relief to the people of this country, from the oppressive taxes to which they are subjected, the government of the country regard it as an engine by which they may with the greater facility augment our debt, and consequently increase our burthens. That it has this effect is certain. No man can look at the price of our funds,

at the sums of money which have been borrowed, and the interest which has been paid for it, without being convinced of the operation of the sinking fund in this point of view. In wife, in cautious hands, who could be encouraged to involve the country in none but expences of absolute necessity, and those conducted with frugality, this might be considered as one of the most advantageous circumstances of this financial system; but it affords a melancholy object of contemplation to perceive, that the favourite point of view in which our ministers regard it, is the facility it gives the carrying on with unprecedented profusion a contest, which, as it derived its origin from their prejudices, owes its continuation to their pride and obstinacy. In the hands of a rash and unthinking artist, the perfection of the machinery only enables him to do the greater degree of mischief; and it is that your lordships and that the public may be convinced of the extent of the mischief already done, that I recommend to your most serious consideration the following

RESOLUTIONS,

I. That it appears to this House, that the amount of the funded debt incurred during the present war is 93,846,000*l*.

II. That it appears to this House, that the sum voted for the service of the present year (exclusive of the civil list and interest of the national debt) amounts to 33,262,362*l*.

III. That it appears to this House that the amount of permanent taxes imposed during the present war is 4,423,351*l*.

IV. That it appears to this House, that a sum of ten millions must, on the conclusion of the war, be raised, for the discharge of arrears and other incumbrances, the interest of which, including the provision to be made by the 32*d* of Geo. III. c. 55, will amount to 600,000*l*.

V. That it appears to this House, that the sum of 200,000*l*. is annually voted by parliament to be added to the fund for the reduction of the national debt.

VI. That the probable increase of the peace establishment, at the conclusion of the present war, will amount to 500,000*l*.

VII. That the annual peace expenditure, calculated on an average of five years, ending 5*th* January 1791, and including the sum annually applied to the reduction of the national debt, amounted to the sum of 16,816,984*l*.

VIII. That it appears to this House, that the abovementioned sums of 16,816,984*l*.—500,000*l*.—200,000*l*.—600,000*l*.—and 4,423,351*l*. making together the sum of 22,540,335*l*. must be provided for, as the lowest future peace expenditure which can be estimated, even supposing the war to conclude with the present year.

IX. That it appears to this House, that the total produce of the taxes for the year

year ending the 5th of April 1796, deducting an occasional payment for the stock of wine on hand, amounted to 15,603,285l.

X. That it appears to this House, that the estimated produce of the new taxes imposed in the present session is 15,603,285l.

XI. That it appears to this House, that the land and malt taxes are calculated by a committee of the House of Commons to produce the sum of 2,558,000l.

XII. That it appears to this House, that, calculating the amount of the taxes existing previous to the war to produce the same on the return of peace, as they did on an average of four years immediately preceeding the war, an improvement in the present revenue may be expected to the amount of 757,480l.

XIII. That it appears to this House, that the abovementioned sums of 15,603,285l.—1,678,000l.—2,558,000l.—and 757,480l making together the sum of 20,596,765l. afford the only resources at present existing, which can be stated as applicable to the future peace expenditure, and that the sum of 1,943,570l. (being the difference between the future peace expenditure, estimated as above at 22,540,335l. and the future peace income, estimated as above at 20,596,765l.) will remain to be provided for.

XIV. That it appears to this House, that the sum of 500,000l. is annually due from the East-India company to the public, provided that a certain surplus profit arises to the said company, after discharging the whole of their regular payments; but that no payment on the above account has been received by the public, since the first of April 1794.

XV. That it appears to this House, that a lottery may be estimated to produce a sum of about 250,000l.

Lord Auckland said, that he felt himself called upon to give the best answer in his power, to the long and argumentative speech, which the noble earl had so particularly directed to him. In the opening of that speech, the noble earl had made a deep and just remark, which could not be too strongly impressed on the attention of the noble earl himself and of their lordships. He had observed, "that the finance of every country is implicated with the government of the country," and had dwelt, with great force of expression, on the fatal effects of a derangement of finance, in the origin and progress of the French revolution. The noble earl had then proceeded to an assertion, and to an attempt to prove, that there exists between the revenue and expenditure of Great Britain, a deficit larger than the French deficit in 1789. The noble earl at the same time lamented, and certainly with much reason, his misfortune in being compelled to represent the circumstances of his country in so deplorable a predicament. It was in the same spirit, and with the same good principles, and with the same just concern for the public interests, that the noble marquis

who

who first introduced these discussions, had exclaimed that, "it was impossible for the mind of man to conceive a more frightful picture of the situation of a country." Lord Auckland said, that in thus reminding the two noble lords of their expressions, he saw with complacency the advantages of his own position, in the present contest with them. Their undertaking led them, in despite of their wishes, to decry, and to debase the efficiency and means, and prosperity of the British empire: on his part, the conviction of his mind impelled him to declare loudly to his countrymen, to Europe, and to all mankind, that our revenues are solidly good, that our manufactures are thriving, that our commerce is increased beyond all example: in a word, that we possess actual prosperity, and great resources. He was aware, that, in maintaining such doctrines, he should find in the mind of every Englishman a disposition to meet him more than half way. But that consideration would give him caution rather than confidence; he felt solicitous not to erect a visionary fabric on the disposition of his hearers. The noble earl reminded him that he had in like manner been sanguine amidst the misfortunes of the American war; and that, in a publication of 1779 he had argued that the vessel of the state would ride safe through the storm. He acknowledged the fact and reverted to it with satisfaction. He had been guided in 1779 by the same principle which guided him at present; an anxious wish to repel every attempt (whatever might be its motive) to lower the credit of our finances, and the spirit and courage of the people. He thought at that period, as in the present day, that so long as we can feel and appreciate our own strength, we have nothing essential to fear from the malignity, and mad exertions of our enemies.

In the debate of the second of the month, he had had the honour to submit several statements to their lordships. The noble earl had now thought proper to controvert all those statements, and in return had produced a detailed system of our revenues and resources, under the ruined circumstances in which the noble earl unhappily supposed them to be involved. It was not from any disrespect that he must decline examining the noble earl's positions. The mere attempt would lead him into a length of argument to which he could not expect to engage their lordships attention; and it was unnecessary. His statements, and those of the noble earl were utterly opposite and contradictory to each other; if the one system could be supported, the other must give way. He should think it sufficient therefore to maintain his own positions against the attacks which had been made upon them; he would shew

that the objections adduced are trivial, or ill founded, or inapplicable. It would then rest in their lordships candour and judgment to impute, to whomsoever it might be imputable, the charge of attempting to mislead the public by "flippant levities, or insidious subtleties, or by quirks and tricks of finance."

Lord Auckland now proceeded to a review of the statement which he had delivered to the House in the former debate; the noble earl, he said, had begun by objecting to the periods selected for the comparative price of the three per cent. consols, and had gravely asked him, why he had not taken the 2d of May, 1783, instead of January 1784. The answer was most obvious: he was comparing our situation in the actual period of war, with the situation of the country at the end of 1783, when the general pacification had recently taken place; with that view he had looked to the price of stocks in the opening of 1784, and had given the result fairly and accurately. The noble earl had applied a similar objection to the periods taken for contrasting the price of India stock; but feeling that the period which he prefers, would have made no material difference, he has recourse to another argument, and lays a great stress on the increased dividend of two and a half per cent. which had taken place since in 1784. In answer to this Lord Auckland desired him to repeat what he had stated in the first debate, that "if the increased dividend had not rested on the solid ground of great and increasing prosperity, it would only have contributed after a certain interval to depress the stock instead of raising it."

The noble earl had next objected to the comparative statements of imports and exports, and was pleased to say that "there was much in the present circumstances of the country, and the reduced trade of our enemy, which led him to consider the augmentation of our trade as temporary and not permanent." But surely such vague and speculative phrases were no answers to the positive facts adduced to shew the increased prosperity of our commerce. The noble earl, however, had added that the increase of the imports and exports, had not occasioned a proportionable increase of revenue. Lord Auckland said that he felt ashamed to dwell on such objections: the noble earl was too well informed not to know, that the nett produce of our revenue is no criterion of the extent of our foreign trade. But why would the noble earl in discussing this point, suffer to pass unobserved the important facts, that in 1783 the value of British manufactures exported was 10,409,000*l.*; and that in 1795 it had risen to 16,526,000*l.*

Must

Must not his silence respecting those facts be considered by their lordships as an admission of them, and of the obvious inferences which had been drawn from them?

The noble earl had next proceeded to the cotton wool, and was of opinion that the importation of that article in 1783, should have been stated at 7,800,000 lbs. instead of 5,000,000 lbs.—Be it so!—It is then admitted by the noble earl that in this latter period, this epoch of desolation and of ruin, the importation of raw cotton for the use of our manufactures is four times as great as it was in the first year of the last peace.

The noble earl would be found equally unsuccessful in his remarks on the exports of British merchandize to India; the noble earl had heard that those exports for 1795-6 had been computed at 1,100,000l. instead of 2,200,000l. In fact, the exports by the East-India company, for 1795 had been about 1,300,000l. as the inspector general's accounts would shew: but in that amount the bullion had not been included; nor the value of goods exported in private trade; which latter object alone might be estimated at 5 or 600,000l.

And here Lord Auckland said, he would take occasion to correct a mistake, in his statement of the net revenues of the different settlements of the East India company, above the charges in 1795: he ought to have stated them at about 2,000,000l. instead of 2,600,000l. His first account had been taken from the parliamentary papers; but a corrected estimate had since been laid before the House of Commons. It was evident, that the sum thus reduced, was amply sufficient for the general purpose of his comparative view.

The noble earl had not objected to the comparative statements of the East India company's sales. But here also a correction was necessary. The office which furnished the account for 1795, had inadvertently omitted the private trade, and the amount instead of being 6,191,894l. ought to have been stated at 7,718,265l. Lord Auckland said that he adverted to this mistake with pleasure, because it had operated against the line of argument which he wished to maintain.

The next object in the statements of the 2d of May, which the noble earl's undertaking should have led him to controvert, was the great comparative increase of British shipping. But his lordship had thought proper to pass it in silence, though certainly it was a distinguished feature in the picture of national prosperity, and might be considered as an unequivocal proof of the successful energy of our countrymen, amidst the calamitous circumstances of the times.

The noble earl had next proceeded to the subject of finance, and had questioned strongly the accuracy of the assertion,

that the net produce of the permanent taxes, on a three years average to the 5th of January 1796, had been above two millions sterling, more than the net produce of the same taxes, on a three years average to the 5th of January 1784. Lord Auckland said that it would be fastidious and fatiguing to go into a detailed explanation of all the official accounts on which his assertion had been founded; but as a general proof of the statement in question the following explanation might suffice. It was in their lordships recollection, as an undisputed fact, that the annual amount of permanent taxes on a three years average to the 5th of January 1784 was 9,876,000*l*. Let it next be observed that the total annual amount of the same permanent taxes on a three years average to the 5th of Jan. 1796, according to the papers before parliament, had been 13,729,000*l*.
 Add one-sixth of a 53d week - - - - - 33,000*l*.

	Total	13,761,000 <i>l</i> .
Deduct for the taxes imposed from 1784 to 1792, and for other charges and improvements made in the revenue during that period - - - - -		1,400,000 <i>l</i> .
	Remains	12,361,000 <i>l</i> .

If the noble lord should not be satisfied with the deduction, let him carry it to half a million sterling more: the result will still be amply sufficient to justify the assertion which he controverts.

The attention of their lordships had next been called to the navy debt; and the noble earl had asked with great earnestness, why the statements of the 2d of May, had given the navy debt as it stood on that day, when the amount, outstanding, and unprovided, was only 2,300,000*l*. and not as it stood in December last, when the amount was near 11,000,000*l*. The noble earl should have recollected, that it was the express purpose of the comparative view to exhibit our *actual* situation, and among other consolatory objects to shew that our resources had been such as to enable us, in this advanced period of the war, to provide for above eight millions of navy debt, and to reduce it as low as it had been in time of peace.

A similar reasoning would furnish a compleat answer to all that the noble earl had brought forwards on the subject of bank advances: their amount had been stated on the 2d of May, at six millions and not at eleven, obviously because provision had lately been made by the energy of parliament for funding five millions of what was due under that head.

In

In the next object of the noble earl's attack, he has fallen into a strange error. He wonders "how any man can presume to come forward with such a statement to parliament and to the public. The unfunded debt (he says) is represented as amounting in January 1794 to twenty seven millions.—May 2d 1796, *it is stated as nothing.*" The wonder is, how any person possessing the noble earl's acuteness and attention, can so totally have mistaken the plain and obvious purport of the passage in question. It would now be a sufficient reply to refer to that passage, in which, after stating the outstanding debt in 1784, the following expressions were used. "No sum is placed in opposition to this amount of twenty seven millions sterling. Estimating the debts actually outstanding and throwing into the opposite scale the whole supplies for which taxes are already found, it might be stated that certainly there is no outstanding *balance of debt unprovided for at this day*; such and so efficient have been the measures adopted and pursued for procuring an accumulation of unfunded debt!"

On the subject of the sinking fund, little or nothing had been said that seemed to call for a reply. The noble earl did not deny that 1783, the first year of peace, there had been no applicable sinking fund. On the contrary, it was notorious that both in that, and the whole of the two following years there was a great deficiency of revenue below the peace expenditure. The noble earl had proceeded to doubt, whether there could be said to be any applicable sinking fund in the present year, because large loans had been made for the purposes of the war. But surely it must be evident to their lordships, that if the permanent revenues produce a sum beyond the ordinary peace establishment, equal to two millions five hundred thousand pounds, and if that sum is made irrecoverably applicable to the gradual discharge of the debt; the statements given on that point upon the 2d of May, are consistent both with candour and with truth. This would best appear from the next article of the comparative statements, which alone remained to be discussed.

It had been asserted in that article that "the amount of revenue *below* the computed expenditure on a peace establishment of fifteen millions in 1783, was 2,000,000l." And that "the amount of the revenue *above* the computed expenditure, on a similar peace establishment, with the addition of increased charges for the debt incurred by the present war, was 3,400,000l." The noble earl's first objection to these assertions is that "they hold out the produce of the sinking fund

"fund as disposable, like any other surplus at the will of parliament." It would be a strange doctrine, to say, that the produce of the sinking fund is not disposable by parliament. But the noble earl will have the candour to refer to the statements in question; which after being delivered in parliament, were printed and published under the persuasion that their accuracy would bear the test of the severest discussion. He will find in the thirty-fourth page of those statements, that "the annual million, set apart in 1786, is to be inviolably applied to the reduction of the debt, till the accumulation, with other accessions and expiring annuities shall amount to 4,000,000*l.* a year, from which period there will revert annually to the disposal of parliament, taxes equal to whatever part of the national debt may be repurchased by the application of four millions a year:" and that "the other branch of the sinking fund was established in 1792; in consequence of which, an addition of one per cent. of the capital is now provided, for the gradual discharge of every new debt created." There is nothing surely in this description of the sinking funds which tends to affect their permanency.

The noble earl's next objection to this article of the statements, is, that it implies a possibility of our peace expenditure, amounting to so small a sum as fifteen millions. Here also if the noble earl will refer to the speech in question, he will find it expressly observed, that the future peace establishment may eventually exceed the supposed amount, but on the other hand that the return of peace is likely to give an increase of revenue; and at any rate, that the computation of a surplus revenue of 3,400,000*l.* will give near 1,000,000*l.* a year, applicable to increased expences and contingencies, and exclusive of 2,500,000*l.* of the two accumulating sinking funds. In order to preclude this reply, the noble earl states the national expenditure during five years of the late peace, as having exceeded seventeen millions a year. But the most cursory perusal of his own details will shew to him, that he has included large sums to the amount of several millions sterling, which do not come within any description of a regular peace establishment.

The noble earl feeling the weakness of these objections, has recourse to another mode of attack, and calls in question the date on which the supposed surplus of 3,400,000*l.* is founded. The noble earl professes to think that the revenue ought to be estimated, not by an average of years, but by the produce of the present year, a third year of war. The mere statement of such a proposition is a sufficient refutation of it; and yet

it

it would not be difficult to obtain the result in question, with-
in a small sum, by pursuing a mode evidently so defective :
In the present instance, however, the following mode had
been adopted.

The taxes imposed to answer the charge created by the war
not being brought forward, because accounts of their pro-
duce cannot yet be obtained, it was presumed that that pro-
duce would be equal to the amount at which it had been esti-
mated, which was 4,500,000*l*. Of that sum about 750,000*l*.
is made applicable to redeeming the principal, and forms what
may called the second sinking fund. The annual profit of the
lottery, and an annual payment on the participation, esta-
blished by law, and accruing from the East India Company,
were also included. Subject to these explanations, the state-
ment in question had been formed as follows :

Nett produce of permanent taxes to Jan. 5, 1794	— —	13,941,000 <i>l</i> .
1795	— —	13,802,000 <i>l</i> .
1796	— —	13,455,000 <i>l</i> .
		41,198,000 <i>l</i> .

It should here be remarked that in stating the last year's
account, an addition had been made beyond the amount, which
appeared in the accounts laid before parliament of about
300,000*l*. for bounties paid in the last year to seamen ; for the
53d week ; for the produce of repealed taxes ; and for some
smaller particulars.

The average of the sum above stated will be about	—	13,730,000 <i>l</i> .
The land and malt	— —	2,558,000 <i>l</i> .
Annual profit by a lottery	— —	250,000 <i>l</i> .
East India payment	— —	500,000 <i>l</i> .
Accumulated profit of the first sinking fund	— —	800,000 <i>l</i> .
Amount of the second sinking fund	— —	750,000 <i>l</i> .
Total		18,588,000 <i>l</i> .

Deducting from the above total 15,000,000*l*. as a supposed
peace expenditure, there will remain a sum, higher even than
that which had been given in the statement of the 2d of May ;
of which sum as has already been explained, about 2,500,000*l*.
are considered as applicable to the discharge of the debt, and
the remainder to such additions of expence as the circum-
stances of this empire, and of nations, may make expedient
on the return of peace.

Their

Their lordships will at the same time be pleased to remark, as a collateral proof that there had been no wish to inflate and swell the account, that it might with fairness of reason have been taken on a peace average, in which case it would have been 450,000*l.* higher; For example:

Nett produce of the revenue to the 5th Jan. 1791	—	14,072,000 <i>l.</i>
1792	—	14,132,000 <i>l.</i>
1793	—	14,284,000 <i>l.</i>
Total		42,488,000 <i>l.</i>

The average of which will be 14,162,000*l.*

There was every probable ground of hope that on the return of peace, our revenue might revert to the height which it had attained, previous to the war. [Lord Auckland here concluded his reply by recalling to their lordships attention the position with which he had set out.] He had undertaken to maintain the accuracy, or at least the general fairness and veracity of his own statements. He conceived that he had fully accomplished that task, and consequently that it was unnecessary for him to discuss the speculative estimates brought forward by the noble earl. In considerations of such extent and importance, so various in their nature, and so liable to be varied by unforeseen circumstances and events, it would be presumptuous to offer predictions; but surely every existing account of our revenue and resources; the flourishing state of our agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; and every apparent evidence of internal opulence and prosperity, gave a consolatory and cheerful picture of the situation and prospects of the British empire, amidst the storms which are shaking so many other nations to their centre.

Earl Moira said, the able detail which the noble lord (Lauderdale) had entered into would render it unnecessary for him to trouble their lordships long. He should therefore confine what he had to say to a few sentences, as he could only repeat what he had been able to state the other day in answer to the noble baron's argument, viz. that all their lordships must measure the revenues and expenditure as he did by facts and experience, and not by speculation. He joined in the present debate reluctantly, but he joined in it in consequence of what had just fallen from the noble baron, because he conceived the noble baron had made use of such expressions as would act in a very dangerous manner, expressions which had unfortunately been too often used, and too invidiously repeated,

but

but which, he apprehended, must be soon exploded, as it might be fatal to continue the illusion. He regarded that as the most manly and the safest policy which looked distinctly at objects, and decided dispassionately and unprejudiced upon them. He wished their lordships and the noble baron, therefore to look distinctly at the situation of this country, to look distinctly at her difficulties, and to seek for remedy and for resources, lest they should be found too late, when they might not be able to apply them. He wished to advert to one point, however, solely, because if he attempted to introduce new matter it would mislead him from the argument, and leave no end to disputation. He wished the noble Secretary (he begged his pardon, he meant to say the noble baron, though perhaps he spoke by augury, when he called him noble Secretary) he wished the noble baron to adhere to that point of the argument which stated the produce of the taxes as they really were and not as they had been, and from that let him judge how far they would answer compared with the public expenditure. This he doubted very much, and thought it folly to look at peace establishments of former years as an estimate of the future. He desired the noble baron and their lordships to remember that of all years to estimate upon the year 1791, was the most improper, because the revenue had suffered a diminution in the receipt of the permanent taxes this year as taken in comparison to that to the amount of 3,500,000*l.* and taken during the whole of the war to a sum above 1,000,000*l.* The noble baron, however, had consoled himself and their lordships, by remarking that in case the permanent taxes should not be sufficient, so great were the exertions of the people, and so unexhausted our resources, that we were yet able to furnish other imposts. In answer to this he would remind the House—"You may call spirits from the vasty deep, but will they come when you do call them?" He feared the taxes were nearly exhausted. They might lay fresh burdens on the people, but he was apprehensive that the distress which those additional imposts would create, would finally destroy the sources of their produce. Such has been the effect already to some degree in their customs, which had evidently failed. If the receipts of the customs in 1776 were compared with 1786, and so upwards from that year to 1792, they would be found to have suffered a very serious decrease; in the lowest comparison to the amount of 300,000*l.* and in the highest to 800,000*l.* Such was the quality and bearing of the imposts now, and what they might be hereafter was too melancholy to conjecture. In the noble baron's statements of the sinking

fund, he found he had deviated from the touchstone on the table, alluding to the papers there; and yet he made that the ground of his argument for the prosperity of the country. Reckoning the permanent taxes at 15,000,000*l.* on the square calculation, the land and malt 2,500,000*l.* which would make 17,500,000*l.* and the lottery and the 500,000*l.* to be paid from the surplus of the East India Company's profits, and the surplussage of the consolidated fund, would make nineteen millions, and yet he did not think the revenue would be paramount, nor even competent to the expenditure. The noble baron computed the ordinaries of the peace establishment at 15,000,000*l.* It has been argued upon reasonable grounds, that it would be impracticable to bring the ordinary expences within the sum of 15,000,000*l.* Ordinaries were in general so invariable in their nature as to admit of an easy and almost exact calculation, except in some instances of the ordnance, victualling, and transport service, when calculating upon those three articles alone from 1786 to 1791, the excess had been found to amount to 800,000*l.* He did not include the expence of the armament in this amount, because special taxes were provided for it. He desired to have it remembered, that he argued upon facts, and that he argued upon nothing *prospectively*. From these facts, established by the papers on the table, it appeared that in the years between 1786 and 1791, the ordinary expences amounted to fifteen millions and a half, without the expences now of late incurred by building barracks, to which were to be added two millions and a half of funded debt, making upon the whole a sum of eighteen millions and a half. What was to be set against this, and how was this balanced? On the other side there was the usual revenue of 15,000,000*l.* with half a million increase of taxes to be put against it, to which was to be added, the million of the sinking fund, making a provision of seventeen millions and a half. Still there remained, however, a million to be provided, for which there was only the 500,000*l.* of the East India Company. He recollected the surplus of the lottery, but desired their lordships to recollect also what further sums remained to be provided for. 7,500,000*l.* had been borrowed to provide for the funding of 4,500,000*l.* of navy bills, and 3,500,000*l.* of exchequer bills, and there remained 500,000*l.* to be provided for, and there were 300,000*l.* more for which no provision was yet made. Was this statement more to be relied upon than that of the noble baron? if it was, then it was evident that the expences amounted to more than the revenue. The noble baron relied upon the competency

of the funds, and the fortitude and patience of the people, to satisfy additional demands; he advised the noble baron, however, if such were really his reliance, to shew himself more strict in future in the statement and the explanation of the public accounts; since upon the first blush he found them loose and inconsiderate. He did not suppose the noble baron had attempted to delude the public, but suspected he had entered into calculations too precipitately, and thereby had deceived himself. It was to set him right therefore, and to explain, the true account for the benefit of the public that he (Earl Moira) found it a duty incumbent upon him to rise, and enter, though reluctantly, into the examination. At the same time, he did not mean to present a gloomy picture of our resources. He by no means despaired of them; he knew they were solid and substantial, but all depended on economy and prudent management of them; the people of England, he was convinced had the firmness and the spirit to sustain their distresses and their burthens, but even the resources of the country, and the moderation and magnanimity of the people might be pressed too far.

Lord Hawkesbury rose to controvert the principles of the noble lord, in his reference to the customs, conceiving that his mode of calculation was fallacious. The way in which he proposed to controvert these principles, was by looking at the taxes, and taking the average of the permanent revenue. Indeed he knew no safer way than taking averages. He would therefore state the average of three years, the years 1792, 1793 and 1794. He objected to taking last year into the comparison, on account of many extraordinary circumstances, which did not operate to the annual production of the permanent revenue. First the distilleries, although they were not then restrained by act of parliament, from working, had in a great measure ceased to do so, on account of the high price of grain. Secondly, the malt breweries were checked by the same cause, and thirdly, the immense distress of the community occasioned by the excessive high price of provisions in general, had a bad effect on the revenues, though at the same time he bestowed his commendation on the people, for the temper and the spirit with which they struggled through these unforeseen, inevitable difficulties. These were the reasons, he observed, why the revenues of last year ought not to be compared with those of 1791. To these the drawbacks upon sugars in a considerable sum might be attributed, and of all the new taxes in 1794 and 1795, few, except the tax upon wine, were subject to pay duties.

He next came to the interest of the debt, and the one per cent. capital. The amount of the taxes and the estimate, in the first year of the war, were nearly equal. In the second year of the war, the produce of the taxes exceeded the estimate, though some did not begin till March, till April and July, and what the produce of the taxes of the present year might be, could not be yet precisely told, though he had every reason to believe they would be both competent and productive.

With regard to the estimate of the peace establishment in 1791, he remarked that it was not the declaration of a committee in the usual way, but of a committee sitting in judgment upon the report of one that had preceded it. What the peace establishment after the present war would be, it was idle to prognosticate, because it depended on the security and permanency of the treaty; but whatever it might be, the sinking fund would continue to be paid, together with the interest of 3,500,000*l.* at 4 per cent. amounting to 140,000*l.* more.

The strength and nerve of our resources, his lordship declared, he could speak of with great satisfaction, as the commerce and prosperous state of the country were most flattering. One per cent. was paid less for interest last year than during former wars. All public works continued and increased their vigour. Another proof of prosperity was, that in 1792, the year before the war, no more than nine and twenty navigation bills were passed, and last year there were forty-seven, and but one hundred and nine enclosure bills were passed in 1792, and last year there were 217. The sums subscribed for the former in time of peace, amounted to one million two hundred thousand pounds, and in the three years of war to 3,600,000*l.* Our commerce, contrary to experience, had so much increased that it was indeed greater than ever was known, although we were deprived of the commerce with France and with Marseilles, which alone formerly amounted to 1,000,000*l.* although our commerce with Flanders was impeded, which formerly amounted to 800,000*l.* and although our commerce was destroyed with Holland, which amounted to 1,600,000*l.* But our trade with Germany increased, and last year amounted to six millions.

Ministers instead of being blamed deserved credit and commendation for exposing to view the whole of our burdens as they did, and for providing the capital of one per cent. They had moreover anticipated a provision for funding 4,000,000*l.* more of navy debt and had adopted such measures, that the 27,000,000*l.* of the unfunded debt for peace was now provided

ed for. This appeared to him to be the real state of our finances. If he deceived their lordships, he was deceived himself. He mentioned the high price of corn and the difficulties the people had encountered on account of the dearth of provisions, and declared too much praise could not be bestowed on their firmness, their temper and their patience. After repeating that the conviction of our national prosperity gave him the highest satisfaction, he concluded with moving the previous question, on the first resolution.

The Marquis of Lansdown begged leave to trouble their lordships with his opinion upon a few of the principal points of the debate, though he scarcely thought it necessary to offer any statement after the complete and masterly manner in which he had heard the subject argued by his noble friend (Lord Lauderdale) who had stated his positions in a manner unanswerably clear. His principles, had not been controverted, and the reason was obvious, the result was so plain, that their lordships had only to attend to them minutely to decide upon them. The noble lord, however, who spoke last, undertook to controvert these principles, and alledged that the mode of calculation of his noble friend was disguised. For that noble lord's experience he had great respect, but he owned, he did not admire his argument. He did not agree with that noble lord upon the propriety of averages of expences in years in time of peace, or averages of taxes in time of peace. There might be grounds of comparison in peace which looked on in the time of war were calculated to mislead. He would repeat what had been already said, that it was impossible to form an idea of the necessary peace establishment at present. As a noble friend of his (the Earl of Coventry) had justly remarked "sufficient to the day, was the evil thereof." The peace establishment at the end of the war must depend on a variety of circumstances unforeseen at present. The nation was encumbered with 100,000,000*l.* additional debt, and no calculation could be made of what its probable revenues might afford in the next peace, when commerce would flow back to general channels, and a great part of its capital be withdrawn. Therefore, he declined that mode of comparison, and thought the reasoning of his noble friend more proper. It appeared a fanciful inference, that because 15,000,000*l.* was the amount of our expenditure before the war, it should be so after. It was easy to suppose that every man who used such arguments became a bigot to them, inasmuch, as they all operated in his favour, and it was easy also to suppose that arguments so specious and so flattering should prevail on people to incline to them

them. Happily for ministers men had not lost their memories. Many there were too credulous, too impotent and indolent to question, or to recollect, or to refer to what was past, but giving up their judgments *sine die* to any pleasing, but delusive tale, would cry, it may be so, and be content. Some circumstances there were, however, in the present case, that rendered it morally impossible that the future peace establishment should not amount to more than 15,000,000*l.* The circumstances he alluded to were the increase of pay to half-pay officers, the allowances to subalterns in the militia and their families, the immense additional expence of barracks, and above all, the high price of provisions. It was intoxicating to be sure to hear of millions and millions, of the energy and spirit with which the people granted these exorbitant supplies as soon as called on, to hear of the immensity of our machinery, and the thousand other brilliant things brought forth to dazzle and deceive. He formerly moved for a particular account of the imports and exports, wanting to get at them correctly, which, if it had been produced, he intended to investigate article by article, and communicate the result of that investigation to their lordships; that excellent servant of the public, the inspector general of the customs (Mr. Irving) however, declared, that it was impossible to make up such a paper as he wanted. Else would he have shewn that 6,000,000*l.* out of the 16,000,000*l.* were to be put to the war account; he would have also shewn that war extended commerce, first by the demand for warlike stores, next by the conquests which we made, and thirdly by the possession of neutral commerce. The inspector general had however dropped an expression, that Great Britain is at present in the possession of the commerce of the whole world. The fact was so, we were by accidental coincidence of circumstance in possession of all the commerce of Europe, and our attempting to starve the enemy, by intercepting provisions, had thrown all the neutral commerce of Europe into our hands. If it be lessened with France and Holland, it finds its way to Germany, where it has extended from the sum of three millions to six; because, clearly including our trade with Holland and France. What conclusion then was to be drawn in favour of the peace establishment from the state of commerce, when France, Holland, and Flanders would each resume its share, which we only held for the moment. A great part of our commerce was occasioned by the war. Commerce, however, would always find its level, and when peace came, it would spread equally over Europe. At present as the noble lord (Lord Hawkesbury

bury) had stated, we did not possess the commerce we formerly carried on with France, Flanders and Holland; but in all probability we held the same circuitously, for report said, we clothed the French armies at this time, as we indisputably formerly clothed the American army during the war with America. He had no pleasure in drawing a gloomy picture, and if he exhibited one at present, he begged to have it understood he did not draw it to gratify a proud malignant spirit, but to awake a pious reformation.

With regard to the answer that had been given to what he had termed the *wretched expedient* that had been resorted to, of laying on taxes that had been taken off, it was somewhat surprising; he had been desired to retract the expression and withdraw it. Could it be denied either in fact or in assertion, that such taxes as those on the paper he held in his hand had been withdrawn and since reimposed? He called therefore upon those, who called upon him to retract his expression, to withdraw theirs. At the same time, that he said this, he by no means despaired of the resources of the country, though two taxes had been abandoned this session, and one of great consideration withdrawn the preceding day, viz. the landed property bill, which was some proof that the minister was almost at the end of his taxes. There were means in our power to make the country revive. He was glad to hear of the general system to open trade and set commerce free by constructing wet-docks, and putting an end to that pernicious practice the bonding system. He cared not from whom or from what party the suggestion of such regulations came, but it was a wise project, and should have his support; he hoped it would be carried into effect; it might answer the great end it aimed at, that of making this country, what it ought to be, the *depot* of the commerce of the south of Europe, and *so verse versa*. The great ports of Amsterdam and Antwerp having lost their trade and being blocked up, we ought to seize on that of both, and derive all the commercial advantages that the opportunities of the war afforded. So well convinced was he of the policy of this conduct, that if he could excite the country to make such an attempt with expedition and efficacy, he should feel more proud, than if he had made the most popular and brilliant speech, that human ingenuity could devise, or the most splendid powers of eloquence ornament and impress on the enraptured minds of an admiring auditory.

Much stress had been laid on a comparative statement of the price of funds in 1783 and in 1796, by a noble baron, but the whole appeared to him to be a delusion. The three per cents,
it

it was true were at 54 in 1783, and at 66 in 1796, and what was the reason? The sinking fund! That served to keep up the price. The sinking fund was an excellent system, there was no magic in it, it was no secret. Who began it? That great man Sir Robert Walpole; but he was not allowed to carry it through. Party ran too high for it. In 1782, when it was put upon an improved footing no man had an idea of the effect it would produce. He foresaw it, and took a part in establishing the new sinking fund; it was mentioned forcibly in the speech from the throne, when he was at the head of administration. This fund would be every thing that policy or wisdom could suggest or desire, if suffered to remain quiet, and not broke in upon; but the best things might be abused, and even that fund might be converted into a dangerous instrument to cause an increase of stock-jobbing and loans to the ultimate ruin of the country. He had already mentioned symptoms of an approach to the end of our resources, and when all further means of taxation were exhausted, he feared the minister would seize upon the sinking fund and appropriate it to his use.

He admitted the argument about the public works to a certain degree, and said that, with regard to canals and enclosures being carried on to a greater extent during the war than in former times, it was true, but he feared there was a great deal of jobbing and a great deal of paper in them, and he spoke not altogether without knowledge of the subject, as he had some property that way, and so, no doubt, had other noble lords! The only question to decide on was, whether this prosperity was permanent? He thought not, and reminded their lordships of the insolvent bank of Ayr, in Scotland, the prosperity and use to the country of which was at one time the universal theme of boasting, and praise: quoting the words of Lord Bacon at the same time, that money, like manure, should be spread to benefit the land; if it lie heaped up like a dunghill it would turn to harm instead of good.

For these reasons, the marquis said, he had recommended peace again and again, and a strict adherence to economy, and the old fashioned excellent system of complying with the constitutional laws of appropriation, and the regulation of all extraordinaries. He thought it his duty to take this unpopular task upon him, and if their lordships consented to these propositions, he would leave other people to calculate and enjoy the honour of their calculations without interruption. He thought it is duty to support every good measure, and to arraign

arraign and expose all bad ones. He thought it is his duty to thank his noble friend for the very able and correct details which he had given, and for which the public would hereafter thank him; he concluded with declaring that he should give his hearty assent to the motion.

Lord Grenville said that without attempting to follow noble lords in detail upon the different points of their arguments, he would say a few words upon some of the matters that had been stated. As to the peace establishment, he never had said that it could not exceed fifteen millions, because it was an impossibility to state any thing like what would be the peace establishment; it must depend on the situation of the country, and the situation of our dependencies, on the relative state of the neighbouring nations, the forces they kept up, and other points that no speculation could reach. For his own part he was not for reducing the peace establishment to the lowest that it could be, although he hoped it would not much exceed what it had been stated at. As to the revenue of the country, it certainly could not be calculated fairly from years of war only. He recapitulated what he had stated on a preceding day, that taking for argument's sake fifteen millions, as the scale of a peace establishment, his noble friend's (*Lord Auckland's*) statements were correct. He next proceeded to discuss the different calculations and inferences of the *Earl of Lauderdale*, and said, he wished the noble lord had taken his average from years of peace and war. The shortness of the taxes last year could be easily accounted for; the stoppage of the distillery was one great deficiency which was not to be ascribed as matter of blame to ministers; the produce of the taxes last year ought not however to be reckoned upon as an estimate, when so many causes could be assigned for their being less productive than formerly. He contended nevertheless that all the taxes laid on for defraying the expence of the war, had hitherto exceeded what they were estimated at. Some noble Lords had asserted that the increase of the exports had arisen from the war, and would cease with the war; but no reason had been adduced to substantiate that argument. The next point was that in the carrying of cargoes of corn, the neutral powers had increased, which ought to have been drawn to ourselves; it ought however to be recollected, that it was upon our naval superiority that the carrying trade depended, and therefore it was in our power to use it as circumstances might require. The speech of the noble marquis, he said, called for some observation. In regard to the high price of the funds, he would gladly concur with the noble marquis, as the high price was entirely owing

to the sinking fund. With a spirit of prophecy it had been predicted, when the Bill for that fund was in agitation, that it would prove eminently useful in time of war. Experience has shewn that it did so. The high price of the funds was an evident proof of the prosperity of the country, as well as the low rate at which money could be borrowed ever since the plan of adding a million annually to the sinking fund had been adopted. He agreed also with the noble marquis, that the fund was an excellent project, but knew not upon what ground he could condemn the use it had been put to, as it had not been disturbed, and he sincerely hoped never would be touched by any minister so as to divert it from its purpose. He highly approved of what the noble marquis had said of the means of improving our commerce, and hoped it would be duly attended to. With regard to our having engrossed the commerce of neutral nations the noble marquis was mistaken. The northern nations of Europe, and America, (the great maritime states to be taken into the question,) enjoyed infinitely a larger share of commerce than ever. From these circumstances, and every view of the country, that he could take, he was convinced of the flourishing state of our commerce and our finances, and that we were perfectly equal to any exertions that might be necessary to carry on with vigour the contest in which we are engaged. Upon the whole he considered the state of the country to be better at present in every respect than the noble lord wished to represent it; in a comparative view far superior to that of the enemy, and adequate to every exertion that the urgency of the times might require.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* said, he did not wish to trespass much on the indulgence of the House; but the noble lord's speech conveyed nothing but general assertions, unsupported by facts or even by arguments, and from what he had said about taking the average from times of peace, it would appear that the noble lord had not read the resolutions which he had the honour to move; there was only another point in the noble lord's speech, which he need answer, and that was respecting the sinking fund; he acknowledged the plan to be good, but two uses might be made of it, so as to suit the objects of ministers and the additional 200,000*l.* might be made an engine in their hands for borrowing, and thereby enable them to go on. He animadverted on what had fallen from lord Hawkebury in two or three points, and commented upon the facts asserted by Lord Auckland, in the two lords several statements of the revenue and expenditure, and amount of taxes in the different years that had been mentioned; differing
in

in the conclusions they had drawn from their own data. He contended that the expenditure of the years of the war, from the papers upon the table, were much greater than ministers allowed in the army, navy, and extraordinary estimates, and he particularly charged the arrears and extraordinaries of the ordnance as a novelty, because the noble duke (the duke of Richmond) who had lately presided there, left his office without any arrears or extraordinaries to be brought against it.—He also noticed the conduct of the East-India company in respect to the 500,000*l.* annually, which they were bound to pay, and after a variety of severe sarcasms said, he did not recollect any thing more in the noble lord's speech that called for a reply.

Lord Hawkebury spoke in explanation of his statements, and charged the noble earl with error in his calculations.

The *Earl of Lauderdale*, in reply, explained how he made out the account that he had stated.

Lord Grenville rose to speak to a particular point, that had escaped him before.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* again replied.

Lord Grenville rose up once more to explain.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* would not admit that he was in the smallest error, and stated from what *items* he made up the account.

The question was at length put upon the first resolution by the lord Chancellor, by mistake, lord Lauderdale reminding him that the previous question was moved, which being put, was carried without a division.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, May 13.

Consolidated funds, misdemeanour costs, dog tax, Foley's estate, dairy windows exemption, landmen, hat duty Bill, stock transfer, Linton and Kadford inclosure Bills, were read a third time and passed.

WET DOCKS.

Sir W. Young rose, and moved the following resolution: that the House, in consideration of the admitted necessity of farther accommodation for shipping in the port of London, will early next session adopt some measure for this purpose.

Mr. Sheridan said, that as the report of the committee had only

only been nominally read, and could not be known to the House, it was precipitate for the House to pledge itself. This being confirmed by the Speaker, Sir W. Young altered the resolution to this, That the House would take the report into consideration.

REAL SUCCESSION BILL.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved the Order of the day, for the third reading of the Bill for granting to his majesty a tax on the real succession of landed estates. The order being read, he moved, "That the Bill be read a third time that day three months; which was agreed to.

Mr. *Sheridan* said, the right honourable gentleman had adhered to his word in postponing the third reading of the Bill to that day three months, which was in fact abandoning it altogether. He hoped he had re-considered his determination of the preceding night, and would extend it to the other Bill, which, he acknowledged, was founded on the same principle of that he had just relinquished. Perhaps the right honourable gentleman might consider it too great a condescension to abandon two great revenue fortresses in one night. He was ready to give him credit for what he had done, if it did not proceed from a conviction that he would not be able to carry it through the House, or if he did, he must submit to a repeal early in the next session. In his mind, the former Bill was much more objectionable than the present, but he was unable to attend the discussion on that Bill? in consequence of indisposition. He was, however, surprised, from what he read of the transaction, to find the commercial city of London so palsied and dead to its own interest as to suffer the Bill to pass with scarcely any resistance. There was an old proverb, that certainly did not appear justified by the strange apathy of the commercial people on the occasion, it was a trite, but coarse remark, that the landed interest so far differed from the monied and commercial, that the latter, whenever it was touched, bristled and grunted like a hog, while the former submitted to be shorn with as much patience as a sheep. Here, however, the case was altered, and the grunting of the commercial was outdone by the successful clamours of the landed interest. Nothing could be worse than to raise distinctions and disturbances between the two interests. On this occasion he conceived that there ought to be no cause given for jealousy, though much in his mind occurred from a view of the transaction, as the landed gentlemen, while they pertinaciously watched their own interests, disregarded those of the persons concerned in the former Bill.

The

The preceding night the right honourable gentleman had professed that both Bills were founded on precisely the same principle; how he could abandon one and not the other, was certainly a matter of surprise and astonishment. The present Bill, he understood, was withdrawn, on the grounds that the landed interest was so heavily burdened that it could not conveniently bear any additional pressure. If this proposition were true, how, he asked, if the present campaign were to be the last, would the honourable gentleman provide three millions for the peace establishment? As the fact stood at present, the revenue of the country was not more than nineteen million, and the peace establishment he confidently asserted would not be less than 23,000,000*l.* which must be provided for by the annual income, and he wished that assertion to be recorded. The world, he conceived, must consider the country insane to pass such a Bill as the former; as the matter stood, if a man died with 500,000*l.* landed property, it must not be touched, while the commercial legatee must have all his affairs ransacked. An insurmountable objection arose in consequence, because though it would take seven years to investigate the accounts of the deceased, still government would by its agents assess the property; in such situation, what man would become an executor, since he would be liable to the deficiency. Under such circumstances, neither the Attorney nor Solicitor General would advise any man to become an executor. This Bill made every heir in the country to a commercial property, not only a ward of chancery, but a ward of the treasury. Commercial capital should be treated with infinite delicacy, as it was in the power of the persons who investigated the effects, to ruin the credit of any house, by making a low return, which must be published to the world, and thus exhibit the parties, in the light of persons not possessing the property which they really did possess. Such surely was a most injudicious tax for a commercial country to adopt, it induced men to retire from business at an early period, not to involve their heirs in the provisions of the Bill, and thus it operated against commercial enterprise, and was in fact a penalty on industry, and gave a legal bounty on indolence. Another glaring oppression in the Bill was, if a young man had only a fourteenth share in a house, and he should die, the whole property must be laid open to public investigation and exposed to public comment. He understood that the taxes to arise from both Bills were estimated at 2,500,000*l.* if it were said it would be difficult to supply the deficiency by the aid of new taxes in the present advanced period of the session, why might not the Sardinian subsidy

subsidy be applied to that purpose, if it were not already paid, before it were sanctioned by parliament, as had been the case with respect to the Emperor and the King of Prussia. Mr. Sheridan concluded by moving, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to indemnify the commissioners of the stamps to postpone for a time limited, to carry into effect the provisions of the said act, if so required by the lords of the treasury."

Mr. M. A. Taylor seconded the motion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, it was a question of doubt with him whether he was justified in trespassing on the patience of the House, on a subject already so amply discussed. He could not in justice, however, avoid, thanking the honourable gentleman for the uncommon sollicitude shewn by him for his reputation, in regard to his relinquishing a measure which he supposed was occasioned by his anxiety to obtain popularity. *The Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he was sensible of his own situation, and would risk the issue on the score of popularity, in putting his support of the measure in competition with the opposition given to it by the honourable gentleman. He would, however, beg leave to decline entering into any discussion of the Bill, as he could not really think him serious in the motion which he proposed to the House. Though the honourable gentleman had been indisposed when the Bill was argued, he had lost nothing by his absence, as his speech evinced that he was complete master of the arguments used on that occasion. Had the hon. gentleman been able to attend at that time, he would have heard his right hon. friend, the Attorney General, demonstrate to the House, that the situation of an executor would be rendered more safe and easy by the Bill, though the hon. gentleman had now confidently asserted that his right hon. friend would, as a lawyer of integrity, advise his clients, in consequence of this Bill, not take upon them the office of executor. He could not help remarking the superior ingenuity of the hon. gentleman's arguments on this occasion (his arguments on all occasions were ingenious) he endeavoured to shew that there would be occasion for additional taxes to the amount of three millions; and on the strength of that presumption desired to begin a reinforcement of the revenue, by taking away one hundred thousand pounds. Whether it was or was not, true, that three millions additional taxes would be required, was not for him now to argue; but he was glad the hon. gentleman had desired it should be recorded, and would probably hereafter remind him of it.

Another argument, equally ingenious and paradoxical, was, that the tax was severe on the commercial interest, though they

they did not resist it, and to increase the paradox, the hon. gentleman repeated an old remark, that if a bristle was plucked from them they felt it. It so happened that this Bill was long going through the House, and went through more stages than other Bills, having been committed and re-committed, and yet little or no resistance was made to it, a strong proof, particularly when reinforced by the hon. gentleman's argument of their "feeling on having a bristle plucked," that they did not conceive it to be oppressive at all.

Mr. *Maurice Robinson* spoke in favour of Mr. *Sheridan's* motion.

General Tarleton observed, that as the two Bills were acknowledged to be founded on the same principle, it was inconsistent in the extreme, as one had been abandoned, not to submit to the present motion.

Mr. *Sheridan* explained. The honourable gentleman mistook him, he said, when he supposed that he was of opinion that three millions ought to be raised to make good the peace establishment. There were ways of working up the revenues, which would, he insisted, on the return of peace, exhibit a deficiency to that amount. The motion was negatived without a division.

BARRACKS.

General McLeod said, if he should have the honour of a seat in the next parliament, he would bring in a motion respecting the removal of soldiers from Barracks in places where an election for a member of parliament was held. At present the existing laws adverted only to fortresses, under which designation the newly-erected barracks did not come, though they were fortresses to all intents and purposes. He would for the present only move, "that the barracks lately erected were not within the exception of the eighth of George III."

The Secretary at War said, the jealousy manifested by the honourable general, with respect to barracks on a former occasion, seemed negatively vanished, as he had insisted that they were to all intents and purposes forts and fortresses. To bring in a resolution to repeal an act was informal, and in case of an election, he would issue such directions as he was justified to issue under the existing law.

Mr. *Grey* said, no doubt could arise but that the jealousy of his honourable friend was well founded; though the barracks in his mind came under the description of fortresses from their strength and solidity, he was nevertheless aware that the Secretary at War might imagine that they were exempted

in

in the Bill; he was however of opinion that he would render himself liable to a severe penalty if he did not issue his orders to remove troops from them in case of an election, if they were within the limits prescribed in the Bill. He therefore wished the General would withdraw his motion.

General Macleod paid the highest respect to the opinion of the honourable gentleman who spoke last, and would readily consent to withdraw his motion; as the barracks however were inclosed with high walls, he thought they might be considered by the Secretary at War as fortresses.

Mr. Sheridan thought it necessary to ask the Secretary at War, whether he considered barracks as coming within the exceptions, or whether he should think it his duty to send away the soldiers from the barracks of any town during an election.

The Secretary at War hoped the house was not under such a delusion as to consider that this was a new question. He would certainly do what the letter and spirit of that act prescribed, and as the practice had been time out of mind.

The motion was withdrawn.

INDIA BUDGET.

Mr. Dundas gave notice, that he would, on Wednesday next, bring forward his India Budget.

QUAKERS.

Mr. Serjeant Adair moved the order of the day for the consideration of the report on the Quakers Bill. After the report was taken into consideration, very long conversations took place on various amendments and clauses that were offered; at last the report was gone through.

Sir William Scott offered a clause to be added to the report. He observed that this Bill was of great importance, as it involved property of a singular nature. He meant the property of the church in tythes, much of which was in the hands of laymen as well as churchmen; it became therefore necessary to be cautious that no law should be made perpetual at once that might tend to affect that property. It became still the more necessary to take care of this species on account of the popular prejudice against it. He was a friend to the present Bill, but thought it should be made only a measure of experiment, in order that the effect of it might be tried before it should be declared perpetual. He therefore proposed a clause, providing, that this Bill shall continue for five years, and from thence until the end of the then next session of parliament.

Mr.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* had not the least objection to this clause, because it appealed to the best test for wisdom, experience. The clause was therefore read, agreed to, and made part of the Bill, which was then ordered to be engrossed, and to be read a third time to-morrow, if then engrossed.

Sir William Dolben moved the order of the day on the Slave carrying Bill, which was, that the House should resolve itself into a committee upon it. The order being read, he moved, That the Speaker now leave the chair.

Mr. *Wilberforce* supported the motion.

General Tarleton opposed the motion.

The House divided, and there not being a sufficient number of members to constitute a House, an adjournment took place of necessity.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

SATURDAY, May 14.

The Royal Assent was given by commission to sixty-four public and private bills: the commissioners were—the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Earl of Westmoreland.

The Earl of Lauderdale moved, that the Lords be summoned for Monday: when he should lay before their lordships a proposition on the Alien Bill. Ordered.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, May 14.

The House was summoned to attend in the House of Lords, where the Royal Assent was given by commission to sixty-four public and private Acts.

SLAVE TRADE.

Mr. *Wilberforce* said, that, as the session of parliament would probably be closed before the Slave-carrying Bill could pass into a law, he would not at present press any thing further on the subject; but next session he would bring forward some measure on this head.

INDIA AFFAIRS.

General Smith said, as the India Budget had been fixed for several days and postponed whether the minister of India Affairs, or any other of his Majesty's ministers attended in their places on Wednesday the eighteenth or not, he would intro-

uced some discussion with regard to the officers in India, the 500,000l surplus to be paid to the public, &c.

Mr. *Long* moved that an address be presented to his majesty, praying that he would confer some dignity in the church on the Reverend Thomas Cauton, Chaplain to the House. Mr. *Long* likewise moved a variety of addresses relative to payment of the expences of the House.

A message from the Lords informed the House that the Lords had agreed to a variety of Bills.

QUAKERS RELIEF BILL.

The Quakers Relief Bill was read a third time, and two clauses brought up by Mr. *Burton* were added by way of Rider.

Mr. *R. Smith* brought up a clause to add to the Bill by way of Rider, to empower any justice of peace for the county of Nottingham to discharge two women who had been confined in prison nine years for not complying with the Marriage Act, though they belonged to a certain class of Quakers, and had the same scruples in which Quakers were indulged.

The *Speaker* said, that he was sorry to start any objection in point of form to such a proposal, but as the proposed clause was not connected with the title, nor consonant to the clauses of the Bill, he thought it could not be introduced without dangerously infringing the rules of the House.

Mr. *Serjeant Adair* supported the clause on its merits.

Sir *William Scott*, the *Master of the Rolls*, and *Richard Sutton* opposed it as a violation of the orders of the House, and also contended it was not right to suffer people to set up religious scruples whether real or pretended, as a pretext for disobedience to the laws of the country. As a point of humanity, they said, however, in a regular way, they would not object to any relief the House would think proper to grant. They further observed, that these people were not allowed to be Quakers, and that they could not come within the provisions of the act.

Mr. *R. Smith* then desired to withdraw the clause, but gave notice that he would early next session move for leave to bring in a Bill for that purpose.

The Quakers' Bill was then passed, and the House adjourned till Wednesday the eighteenth instant.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, May 16.

QUAKERS' BILL.

The order of the day being read for the second reading of the Quakers' Bill—

The

The Archbishop of Canterbury said, that having understood it was intended to pass this Bill with great haste and precipitation, he thought it his duty to apprize their lordships, that it was a Bill of great importance, and implicated much property, and had only been brought into the House the other day. The sort of precipitancy proposed in passing it was hardly ever adopted in the case of a common Bill, and this was by no means a common one. He believed, that most of their lordships were unacquainted with its contents. The necessity for such a Bill was said to be grounded on a matter of conscience, and the provisions of it were intended to satisfy the religious scruples of the people called Quakers. He was willing to give the Quakers full credit for the sincerity of their scruples, but there wanted more consideration than could possibly be given to the subject hastily, before so material an innovation on the establishment of our religious system of law out to be acceded to. It was alleged, that from a principle of conscience, a particular religious class of men, felt themselves bound to resist the payment of tithes; and by this Bill, the clergyman was to be restrained from suing for his tithes, as he might do at present, and was only allowed to sue for them in a peculiar manner; and if he resorted to the common process of the law, he would incur all the costs of the suit upon himself. This was giving evident advantage to a body of men, who already, upon their own statement, felt themselves inclined, from a principle of conscience as they state, to litigate the subject of tithes with the clergy, many of whom could ill afford, from their narrow revenue, to maintain continual suits for the obtainment of their legal rights. Further time ought in justice to the clergy to be given before a Bill so immediately affecting their interests and their income was passed into a law. He thought it incumbent upon him, and required of one who held the situation, which he, however, unworthily, had the honor to fill, to step forwards on their behalf, and propose the postponement of the Bill; therefore, for the reasons he had stated, he should move, that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

The Duke of Norfolk admitted, that the Bill had been but a short time before their lordships, but the proposition it held forth in favour of a very quiet and loyal description of his majesty's subjects, that he could not but hope, that notwithstanding the arguments of the right rev. prelate, their lordships would pass it, and the more especially as it had received the most attentive consideration of the civilians and crown lawyers, whose duty it was to guard and take care of the rights of the church.

The

The Bishop of Rochester said, he rose to second the right reverend metropolitan, with whom he entirely concurred. Exclusive of the general objections their lordships had heard stated, the Bill had several inaccuracies in it. With regard to the pretended matter of conscience, he could not conceive how the mind was constructed that could entertain such scruples as to refuse the property of another to its right owner; he should not inquire of what composition such consciences were made, though it was certainly a conscience very favourable to the interests of the possessor. If the bill went no further than to give a more easy and summary mode in the collection of tithes, he should feel no objection against it; but he feared, though it might not be intended, it deprived the clergy of their remedy at law, which, in many cases was absolutely necessary. The process in the exchequer to compel the discovery, must frequently be resorted to, and could not be supplied by any other. His lordship stated the acts of William III. and George I. by which a summary mode was already appointed to enable the clergy to collect tithes under *vol.* He therefore thought the Bill, at least, should have much serious consideration, before it was agreed to, and upon that ground he would support the motion of the right reverend and learned prelate.

The Lord Chancellor said, there was undoubtedly a large class of men, denominated Quakers, a sober, temperate, inoffensive and industrious people, who from a conscientious principle, not perhaps founded in right reason, opposed the payment of tithes. Their conduct was peaceable, their morals good; in other respects, they claimed great credit from the regularity and propriety of their deportment. The more these scruples were in themselves removed from right reason, the harder they were to cure; and therefore he conceived, that a lenient treatment resulting from notions of liberal and harmless toleration was such as the noble prelates themselves must approve and wish to apply. If a mode was devised, which could recover the tithes, the object of dispute, without injuring the rights of the clergy, at the same time also as little as possible injuring those who, from a mistaken principle acted obstinately, he trusted no person would oppose the measure. The present was of that nature; and he believed, the apprehensions of the reverend prelates arose from a misapprehension of the clauses; if an action or suit was commenced for tithes, the clergyman would not be liable to the costs, unless it fully appeared to the court, that he chose the most expensive mode of litigation, from vexatious motives. The Bill, in its progress
through

through the other House, had received ample discussion; and he also knew that it was conducted in the fairest manner possible, by those who brought it forwards. He had an opportunity of seeing and reflecting upon it, before it came into parliament, and the outline and principle of it were such as met his approbation. There was one other object in it, which was to admit the affirmation of a Quaker in a criminal case. The sanction and punishment were the same as in respect to oaths falsely to affirm, was equally liable to the penalty of perjury, as it was in the other case of false oaths. The public would clearly be gainers by the regulation: as the case now rested, the Quaker was excused from attending in a criminal court, and the offender had frequently in very flagitious and irrefragable cases escaped on that account alone. Not was there any thing novel in this: many rigid persons of the Scotch church, would not swear by laying their hands upon the book, and the court, in such cases, ordered them to be sworn, after the manner accordant to their consciences and the customs of their church. After arguing strenuously in defence of the principle of the Bill and fully justifying the clauses, his lordship said, he would not resist the motion of the right reverend prelate; he had too much personal respect for him to object pertinaciously to a motion which he was sure his grace thought his situation demanded at his hands, he was persuaded, however, that when his grace had looked at the Bill, examined it attentively, and weighed the probable operation of its clauses, he would find it unexceptionable.

The motion, to read the Bill a second time that day two months, was then agreed to.

MR. COWPER.

Lord Grenville said, he had a motion to submit to their lordships, which he was persuaded, would meet with unanimous assent. It related to Mr. Cooper, the clerk at their lordships' table. Were he not present, he should be tempted to say all that his friendship for him could dictate but not more than he merited. Indeed he could scarcely say more in his favour than every one of their lordships must know to be well founded. He therefore should forbear to say that which he knew they all felt, but would content himself with moving, "An Address to his Majesty to confer some mark of his royal favour upon Henry Cowper, Esq. the Assistant Clerk of the House, for his meritorious services," &c. &c. which passed *nem. con.*

Mr. Cowper bowed to the Chancellor and Lord Grenville. —Adjourned.

LORDS.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, May 17.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* rose to desire the attention of the House to a subject upon which he had before had the honour of addressing their lordships, the collateral legacy Bill. When he before opposed the Bill, he did it as being coupled with the real estate succession Bill, since abandoned by the minister.—Neither of the Bills ought to be in force separately. He meant to conclude with introducing a Bill to suspend the operation of the collateral legacy Bill until the first of January next, that their lordships might have an opportunity of preventing that injustice, which otherwise must ensue, if the one sort of property was to be exclusively taxed, and the land not so. In naming the first of January, he did not mean by that to say, that the Bill ought ever to obtain and be in force; he thought it the more objectionable of the two, as a tax on capital was more mischievous than a tax on landed property, but after the repeated discussions, which they had heard upon the finances of the country, he was certain that ministers must call parliament together in the interval, indeed long before Christmas—when the Bill might be repealed *in toto*. He concluded by moving, that the Bill for suspending the collateral legacy Bill be read a first time.

The *Lord Chancellor* stated, that by the standing orders, a Bill, after it had passed, could not, in the same sessions, be either repealed or altered, in any degree or shape whatsoever. The motion of the noble lord was certainly within this principle; because to suspend the operation of a Bill was most certainly that sort of alteration, or so far a repealing as to militate against this principle. He should therefore move, that the Bill be rejected, which was agreed to.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* then entered his protest on the journal of the House.

Read the Bills on the table. Adjourned.

The *Earl of Lauderdale* then entered the following protest.

DISSENTIENT,

1. Because the Tax on collateral succession to moveable property is, in its operation, a tax on capital instead of income; and consequently may impress, at this critical period other nations with the idea that all the regular and legitimate objects of taxation are exhausted in this country.

2. Because it is obviously unjust thus deeply to tax on succession, the one denomination of property, and wholly to exempt the other.

3. Because

3. Because greater inconvenience and injury may arise to individuals from a public exposure of the circumstance and amount of their personal property, especially when the same is employed in commerce, than can possibly accrue from making a like statement of the value of their estates.

4. Because, if there be, as his Majesty's ministers have so frequently asserted, discontented spirits in the country, this partial impost will arm with a fact their declamations against the inequality of law, the hardships which press on some parts of the community, and the exemptions by which others are favoured.

LAUDERDALE.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, May 18.

Their lordships confirmed the judgment of the court of sessions of Scotland, in the cause of *Anstruther v. Anstruther*.

COMMISSION.

The royal assent was given by commission to nine public and five private Bills. The commissioners were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, and Earl Spencer.

The *Earl of Macclesfield* informed their lordships, that in consequence of their humble address to his majesty, in favour of Mr. Cowper, assistant clerk to the House, his majesty was graciously pleased to return for answer, that he had given orders accordingly.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, May 18.

Foley's estate Bill was read a third time, and passed.

Lord Stopford at the Bar, acquainted the House, that his majesty had received their address respecting the provisions to be made for the clerks of the House; and was graciously pleased to inform the House that he had given the necessary directions as specified by the same.

SLAVE TRADE.

Sir William Dalben said, that probably he would not again have a seat in that House, but wished before the prorogation of parliament to mention a few words. He begged to have it remembered, that it was his anxious desire, to have the slave-

carry-

carrying trade taken from out of the hands of private individuals, and placed in those of government. Such regulation he was persuaded, would be of advantage to the unfortunate negroes, as the spirit of gain was such at present, that the middle passage Bill was grossly violated, and hundreds of slaves above the amount specified in the act of parliament, were often crowded together, without any notice being taken of the circumstance by government.

The *Speaker* reminded the honourable baronet, that there was no question before the House.

Mr. *Wilberforce* rose, and merely stated, that it was his desire to have it understood, that however he might agree with his honourable friend in other particulars on the same subject, yet what had now fallen from him, did not accord with his idea.

Messengers were received from the Lords signifying to the House the passing of several public and private bills; and one desiring the attendance of the Commons in the House of Peers.

The *Speaker* having in consequence attended, at his return acquainted the House, that the royal assent, by commission, had been notified to the lottery Bill, to the Bill for granting 200,000*l.* to the bank for the liquidation of the national debt, and to several other public and private Bills.

EAST INDIA COMPANY.

General Smith complained, that as the East-India budget had been several times put off, he was justified in urging every thing he had formerly advanced, respecting the advantages promised by the first lord of the treasury, and secretary of state in that House, as they had been also mentioned in another House, to be derived from the annual payment of 500,000*l.* by the East-India company, as a stipulation for the renewal of their charter, which he was sorry to say had not been punctually performed.

He was interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Secretary Dundas, who said he expected a discussion to have come on to-day, concerning the West-India expedition.

The *Speaker* said, notice only had been given of a motion upon it, but no order of the day was moved.

General Smith resumed his speech, and said, as he might not in the present session be favoured with another occasion, he felt it his duty to state to the House his sentiments on the subject. He then entered into a history of the resolutions of the House, and the proceedings of the company respecting the 500,000*l.*

to

He then entered into a history of the resolutions of the House, and the proceedings of the company respecting the 500,000*l* to be paid as participation money annually to government.— If gentlemen looked at the papers on the table, they would see that a sum of money would be owing by the company in July 1796; and he was aware that the company was not able to make good the annual sum of 500,000*l*. to government.— There were no wars in India to preclude the prosperity of the company; and hence it was plain the grounds had been miscalculated on which the right honourable gentleman's hopes had been rested. He asked, was there any prospect of payment in future? Was there any transfer of stock made to secure the payments? The general then adverted to the circumstances of the army in India,—he gave the right honourable gentleman credit for his arrangements, which placed that respectable body of men on a better footing: but whoever considered the disturbances that lately took place, would see that they were far from being perfectly satisfied. He read several letters from officers in India to maintain his arguments respecting the company, and concluded by moving the order of the day.

Mr. *Secretary Dundas* said, that to answer completely the objections of the honourable general, it would be necessary for him to go over the whole state of the company's affairs; he would however merely revert to the renewal of their charter. The data on which he made his arrangements were not then questioned by the House, nor, as well as he recollected, by the honourable general himself. Experience since evinced to him that he had not assumed fallacious grounds; and, without going into a detailed explanation, he was warranted to assert, from the annual returns in the three past years, that there was enough of surplus for the dividends of 500,000*l*. to be annually made good to government, after a sufficiency for defraying all expences, establishments, and circumstances whatever. It appeared, by the sales of the lowest years, that the surplus was never less than 500,000*l*. and every hour realized to him, that state of the company's affairs which he anticipated in 1792:— He begged to remind the honourable general, that if the company had not since the year 1792 paid a farthing of the participation money, what he then said would not be contradicted. He never promised that the company's affairs would be so flourishing as to do that in time of war. But though he did not promise so much, still the payments made by the company in the three last years exceeded his hopes. In 1794 and 1795 they paid the 500,000*l*. and this year they paid 400,000*l*. If then, in the three last years, there had been so little deficiency in the India estimates, he had not a doubt but the participation

money was as secure to government, as the internal resources and revenues of this country. In the year 1793, estimates had been prepared by the court of directors, and it appeared that the sales amounted to upwards of 4,900,000*l.* but the last sales were upwards of six millions. This growing state of the company's affairs, was proved by papers on the table, and did not rest on his or the honourable general's assertions. Another very material circumstance was, the freight and demurrage of ships, it appeared, cost the company about a million and a half annually, which would entirely be at an end in time of peace. Notwithstanding, however, the great expences of war, the company paid this year 400,000*l.* and, hence it might be inferred, that they would be able to pay the annual 500,000*l.* in time of peace, together with making good all the deficiencies. This they unquestionably would be enabled to do by the savings at home; savings adequate to all expences and charges whatever. Mr. Dundas then adverted to the statement of the honourable general, respecting the intemperance of the officers in India, and lamented that a matter of such serious complexion had been mentioned in that house, on bare rumour. He did not mean to question the private information which General Smith read to the House; but he put it to his own candour and discretion, whether it were not better to let such reports subside into oblivion. He had heard such rumours himself, but they did not come to him in any official way; and hence he wished to pass them by in silence, though he heard them with pain. He was aware that the officers themselves, on finding that the honourable general mentioned their heat and intemperance in a British House of Commons, would lament that the matter had been made so public. If they were guilty of the alledged misconduct, the honourable general must know, that they were guilty of the capital crime, which the law termed rebellion; and if regularly noticed in that House, the charge must be attended with serious consequences to them. He did not mean to say, that they had not laboured under hardships, at the same time however, much had been done to relieve them and put them on a better footing: much time of necessity elapsed before the proper arrangements for their relief could be made; and after being made, the regulations could not be immediately transmitted to India, which were to do them all the justice and advantage that had been intended them. On that view of the case, he thought the honourable general would admit that he had urged the matter somewhat rashly and unnecessarily. He agreed with the honourable general, that they were a respectable body of men; and concluded, by lamenting that he had mentioned their indiscretion, which

which he himself scorned to take serious notice of, on so slight and fallacious a ground, as that of vague rumour.

General Smith explained.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY *May 19.*

This day at three o'clock his majesty came in the usual state to the House of Peers; and the Commons being required to attend, the Speaker, with about one hundred members, attended at the bar: after the Speaker had addressed his Majesty, he was pleased to deliver the following gracious speech from the throne.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" The public business being now concluded, I think it proper to close this session, and at the same time to acquaint you with my intention of giving immediate directions for calling a new parliament.

" The objects which have engaged your attention during the present session, have been of peculiar importance; and the measures which you have adopted, have manifested your continued regard to the safety and welfare of my people.

" The happiest effects have been experienced from the provisions which you have made for repressing sedition and civil tumult, and for restraining the progress of principles subversive of all established government.

" The difficulties arising to my subjects, from the high price of corn, have formed a principal object of your deliberation; and your assiduity in investigating that subject, has strongly proved your anxious desire to omit nothing which could tend to the relief of my people, in a matter of such general concern. I have the greatest satisfaction in observing, that the pressure of those difficulties is in a great degree removed.

" Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" I must, in a more particular manner, return you my thanks for the liberal supplies which you have granted, to meet the exigencies of the war. While I regret the extent of those demands, which the present circumstances necessarily occasion, it is a great consolation to me to observe the increasing resources by which the country is enabled to support them. These resources are particularly manifested in the state of the different branches of the revenue, in the continued and progressive extension of our navigation and commerce, in the steps which have been taken for maintaining and improving the public credit, and in the additional provision which has been made for the reduction of the national debt.

" My

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"I shall ever reflect, with heartfelt satisfaction, on the uniform wisdom, temper, and firmness, which have appeared in all your proceedings since I first met you in this place. Called to deliberate on the public affairs of your country in a period of domestic and foreign tranquillity, you had the happiness of contributing to raise this kingdom to a state of unexampled prosperity. You were suddenly compelled to relinquish the full advantages of this situation, in order to resist the unprovoked aggression of an enemy, whose hostility was directed against all civil society, but more particularly against the happy union of order and liberty established in these kingdoms. The nature of the system introduced in France, afforded to that country, in the midst of its calamities, the means of exertion beyond the experience of any former time. Under the pressure of the new and unprecedented difficulties arising from such a contest, you have shewn yourselves worthy of all the blessings that you inherit. By your counsels and conduct, the Constitution has been preserved inviolate against the designs of foreign and domestic enemies; the honour of the British name has been asserted; the rank and station which we have hitherto held in Europe has been maintained; and the decided superiority of our naval power has been established in every quarter of the world.

"You have omitted no opportunity to prove your just anxiety for the re-establishment of general peace on secure and honourable terms: but you have, at the same time, rendered it manifest to the world, that, while our enemies shall persist in dispositions incompatible with that object, neither the resources nor spirit of Englishmen will be wanting to the support of a just cause, and to the defence of all their dearest interests.

"A due sense of this conduct is deeply impressed on my heart. I trust that all my subjects are animated with the same sentiments, and that their loyalty and public spirit will ensure the continuance of that union and mutual confidence between me and my parliament, which best promote the true dignity and glory of my crown, and the genuine happiness of my people."

The Lord Chancellor then stated, that it was his majesty's pleasure that parliament be prorogued until the 5th of July next.

His majesty retired in the same state, and the Commons withdrew to their own chamber.

THURSDAY, *May 19.*

Mrs. Hastings's Naturalization, and Johnstone's Estate Bills were reported, read a third time and passed, and sent to other House, where, with the other public and private Bills, it received the royal assent.

Account of corn imported was presented—to lie on the table.
Adjourned.

END OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE SEVENTEENTH
PARLIAMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN.

DISSOLUTION

DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

By the KING.—A PROCLAMATION,

For dissolving the present Parliament, and declaring the calling of another.

GEORGE R.

WHEREAS we have thought fit, by and with the advice of our privy council, to dissolve this present parliament, which now stands prorogued to Tuesday the 5th day of July next: we do, for that end, publish this our royal proclamation; and do hereby dissolve the said parliament accordingly: and the lords spiritual and temporal, and the knights, citizens, burgesses, and the commissioners for shires, and burghs, of the House of Commons, are discharged from their meeting and attendance on Tuesday the 5th day of July next. And we being desirous and resolved as soon as may be, to meet our people, and to have their advice in parliament, do hereby make known, to all our loving subjects, our royal will and pleasure to call a new parliament, and do hereby further declare, that, with the advice of our privy council, we have this day, given order to our chancellor of Great Britain, to issue our writs in due form, for calling a new parliament; which writs are to bear test on Saturday, the twenty-first day of this instant May, and to be returnable on Tuesday the twelfth day of July.

Given at our court, at St. James, the 20th of May 1796, in the 36th year of our reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

By the KING.—A PROCLAMATION,

In order to the electing and summoning the sixteen Peers of Scotland.

GEORGE R.

WHEREAS we have, in our council, thought fit to declare our pleasure for summoning and holding a parliament of Great Britain, on Tuesday the 12th day of July next ensuing, the date hereof: in order therefore to the electing and summoning the sixteen Peers of Scotland, who are to sit in the House of Peers in the said Parliament; we do, by the advice of our privy council, issue forth this our royal proclamation, strictly charging and commanding all the Peers of Scotland to assemble and meet at Holyrood House, in Edinburgh, on Thursday the 30th day of June next ensuing, between the hours of twelve and two in the afternoon, to nominate and chuse the sixteen peers, to sit and vote in the
House

House of Peers, in the said ensuing parliament, by open election and plurality of voices of the peers that shall be then present, and of the proxies of such as shall be absent (such proxies being peers, and producing a mandate in writing, duly signed before witnesses, and both the constituent and proxy being qualified according to law.) And the Lord Clerk Register, or such two of the principal clerks of the Session as shall be appointed by him to officiate in his name, are hereby respectively required to attend such meeting, and to administer the oaths required by law to be taken there by the said election made, and to take their votes; and immediately after such election made, and duly examined, to certify the names of the sixteen Peers so elected, and sign and attest the same, in the presence of the said peers the electors; and return such certificate into the High Court of Chancery of Great Britain. And we do, by this our Proclamation, strictly command and require the Provost of Edinburgh, and all other the magistrates of the said city, to take special care to preserve the peace thereof during the time of the said election; and prevent all manner of riots, tumults, disorders, and violence whatsoever. And we strictly command, that this our royal Proclamation be duly published at the Market Cross, at Edinburgh, and in all the county towns in Scotland, twenty-five days at least before the time hereby appointed for the meeting of the said Peers to proceed to such election.

Witness ourself at Westminster, the 20th of May, 1796, in the 36th year of our reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

The following **BILLS** received the Royal Assent in the course of the Session, commencing October 29, 1795, and ending May 19, 1796, and were all the **PUBLIC ACTS** of that Period.

23d November. **A**N Act for continuing and granting to his majesty certain duties upon malt, mum, cyder, and perry, for the service of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six.

An Act for granting an Act to his majesty, by a land tax to be raised in Great Britain, for the service of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six.

An Act to prohibit the exportation of corn, meal, flour, and potatoes, and to permit the importation of corn and other articles of provision, for a limited time, in any ships whatever, without payment of duty.

An Act to continue an Act for permitting the importation of organized thrown silk, flax, and flax seed into this kingdom, in ships or vessels belonging to any kingdom or state, in amity with his majesty for a limited time.

1st December. An Act for prohibiting for a limited time, the making of starch, hair-powder and blue, from wheat and other articles of food, and for lowering the duties on the importation of starch, and of other articles made thereof.

An Act to prohibit the exportation of candles, tallow, and soap, for a limited time.

18th December. An Act for the safety and preservation of his majesty's person and government against treasonable and seditious practices and attempts.

An Act for the more effectually preventing seditious meetings and assemblies.

An Act to prevent obstructions to the free passage of grain within the kingdom.

An Act for the better relief of the poor within the several hundreds, towns, and districts, in that part of Great Britain, called England, incorporated by divers Acts of parliament, for the purpose of the better maintenance and employment of the poor; and for enlarging the powers of the guardians of the poor, within the said several hundreds, towns, and districts, as to the assessments to be made upon the several parishes, hamlets and places, within their respective hundreds, towns, and districts, for the support and maintenance of the poor.

An Act for embanking, draining, and otherwise improving, a certain stinted pasture, called Lancaster Marsh, in the county Palatine of Lancaster.

An Act to continue the term of two Acts, passed in the twenty-second year of the reign of King George the Second, and the thirteenth year of his present majesty, for repairing and widening the road leading from the well, at the north west end of the town or village of Farnborough, in the county of Kent, to a place called Riverhill, in the parish of Seven Oaks, in the said county.

An Act for enlarging the term and powers of three Acts of the sixth and sixteenth years of his late majesty, and the second year of his present majesty, for repairing the roads leading from Wades Mill, in the county of Hertford, to Barley and Roylton, in the said county.

24th December. An Act for granting to his majesty additional duties of excise on tobacco and snuff.

An Act for granting to his majesty further additional duties on the amount of the duties, under the management of the commissioners for the affairs of taxes, therein-mentioned.

An Act for granting to his majesty new duties on certain horses, not charged with duty by any other Act or Acts of parliament, and on mules.

An Act for granting to his majesty several additional duties on horses kept for the purpose of riding, or drawing certain carriages therein-mentioned.

An Act for repealing the duties on licences to persons using or exercising the business of an horse dealer, and granting new duties in lieu thereof.

An Act for the reduction of the drawbacks, and bounties now allowed on the exportation of sugar.

An Act for determining the present allowances for waste on salt, carried coast-wise, and for reducing the respective terms of payment of the duties on salt.

An Act to continue for a further limited time, an Act made in the last session of parliament, intituled "An Act to prohibit for a limited time the making of low wines and spirits, from wheat, barley, malt, or any other sort of grain, or from any meal, flour or bran; and for permitting home made spirits, deposited in the warehouses for exportation, to be taken out for home consumption on payment of duty; and to prohibit the distillation of low wines or spirits, from melasses of the manufacture of this kingdom, or from sugar or potatoes.

An Act for punishing mutiny and desertion, and for the better payment of the army and their quarters.

An Act for allowing bounties for a limited time on the importation into Great Britain of any wheat, wheat flour, Indian corn, Indian meal, or rye, in British ships or other ships the property of persons of any kingdom or state, in amity with his majesty, or on the delivery of the same, out of warehouse, for home consumption.

An Act to permit bakers to make and sell certain sorts of bread.

An Act to amend so much of an Act made in the ninth year of the reign of King George the First, intituled "An Act for amending the laws relating to the settlement, employment, and relief of the poor, as prevents the distributing occasional relief to poor persons in their own houses, under certain circumstances and in certain cases."

March 7. An Act for enabling his Majesty to raise the sum of two millions five hundred pounds, for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

An Act for raising a certain sum of money by loans or exchequer bills, for the service of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six.

An Act for raising a further sum of money by bills or exchequer bills for the service of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six.

An Act for the regulation of his Majesty's marine forces while on shore.

An Act for indemnifying governors, lieutenant governors, and persons acting as such in the West India Islands who have permitted the importation and exportation of goods and commodities in foreign bottoms.

An Act for further continuing an Act made in the thirty-third year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled, "an Act for establishing courts of judicature, in the island of Newfoundland, and the islands adjacent to it."

An Act for increasing the rates of subsistence, to be paid to inn-keepers and others, on quartering soldiers.

An Act to explain and enlarge the powers contained in the charter of the London Assurance of houses and goods from fire.

An Act to explain and enlarge the powers contained in the charter of the Royal Exchange assurance of houses and goods from fire.

An Act for rendering effectual an Act of the thirty-second year of the reign of his present Majesty, for the better relief and employment of the poor of the parishes of Montgomery and Pool, and the places united therewith, in the counties of Montgomery and Salop.

An Act to enable the trustees for executing an Act passed in the thirty-second year of the reign of his present majesty, for repairing, altering, and improving the parish church of Saint Bridget, otherwise Saint Br. de, in the city of London, and for providing a workhouse for the same, to raise a further sum of money for completing the purposes of the said Act.

An Act to enable the company of proprietors of the Thames and Severn canal navigation, to raise a certain sum of money for discharging some arrears of interest, and other debts relating thereto, and to maintain and support the said navigation.

An Act for extending the term of the tax on lands, and tolls on goods, wares, and merchandizes, granted by an Act passed in the thirty-fifth year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "an Act for improving the drainage of the Middle and South Levels, part of the Great Level of the fens, called Bedford Level, and

the low lands adjoining or near to the said levels, as also the lands adjoining, or near to the river Ouze, in the county of Norfolk, draining through the same to sea, by the harbour of King's Lynn, in the said county; and for altering and improving the navigation of the said river Ouze, from or near a place called Pau Brink, in the parish of Wiggenshall Saint Mary, in the said county, to the said harbour of King's Lynn; and for improving and preserving the navigation of the several rivers, communicating with the said river Ouze.

An Act for making and repairing the roads from the bridge of Dee, Southward through the county of Kincardine, to or near to the town of Stonehaven, and from hence by Invertervie, and by Lawrence Kirk, to the lower and upper bridges, over the river Northesk, and for making effectual the statute labour in the said county, and levying conversation money, in lieu of labour in certain cases, and otherwise regulating, making, and repairing high roads and bridges in the said county of Kincardine.

An Act for enlarging the term and powers of two Acts, passed in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of his late majesty, King George the Second, and in the sixteenth year of the reign of his present majesty, for repairing the road from the city of Coventry to Warwick, and from Coventry to Martyn's Gutter, and also several other roads therein mentioned, so far as the said Acts relate to the said road from Coventry to Warwick, and from Coventry to Martyn's Gutter.

An Act for continuing and enlarging the term and powers of two Acts, made in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of his late majesty, King George the Second, and the twelfth year of his present majesty, in as far as respects the road from North Queensferry, in the county of Fife, to the town of Perth, and more effectually making, repairing, and keeping in repair the said road, and the landing places at the Queensferry.

An Act to continue the term and powers of an Act, passed in the twelfth year of the reign of his present majesty, King George the Third, for repairing, altering, and keeping in repair the roads from Sheet Bridge to Portsmouth, and from Petersfield to the Alton turnpike road, near Hopley, in the county of Southampton.

An Act for making and maintaining a convenient carriage road from Wearmouth Bridge to Tyne Bridge, with a branch from the said road to the town of South Shields, all in the county of Durham.

An Act for continuing the term, and altering and enlarging the powers of three several Acts, passed in the twenty-fifth and twenty-ninth years of the reign of his late majesty, King George the Second, and the seventeenth year of the reign of his present majesty, for repairing certain roads therein mentioned, so far as the same Acts relate to the road from the town of Leeds, through Narwood, to the south west corner of the inclosures of Narrogate, in the West Riding of the county of York.

An Act for more effectually repairing the road from Colne to Blackburn, in the county of Lancaster.

An Act for amending and rendering more effectual two Acts, made in the twenty-ninth and thirty-third years of the reign of his present majesty, for repairing certain roads in the county of Perth.

24th March. An Act for defraying the charge of the pay and cloathing of the militia in that part of Great Britain called England, for one year, beginning the twenty-fifth day of March, one thousand seven hundred and ninety six.

An Act to continue several laws relating to the giving further encouragement to the importation of naval stores from the British colonies in America; to the encouragement of the silk manufactures, and for taking off several duties on merchandize exported, and reducing other duties; to the preventing the clandestine running of goods, and the danger of infection thereby; to the encouraging the growth of coffee in his Majesty's plantations in America; to the free importation of cochineal and indigo; to the granting a bounty on certain species of British and Irish linens exported, and taking off the duties on the importation of foreign raw linen yarns made of flax; to the importing salt from Europe into the province of Quebec in America; to the encouraging the manufacture of leather, by lowering the duty payable upon the importation of oak, bark, when the price

of such bark shall exceed a certain rate; to the more effectual encouragement of the manufactures of flax and cotton in Great Britain; to the allowing the importation of rape seed and other seeds used for extracting oil, whenever the prices of middling British rape seed shall be above a certain limit; to the allowing a drawback of the duties on rum shipped as stores, to be consumed on board merchant's ships in their voyages; to the clandestine running of unaccustomed goods, and preventing frauds relating to the customs; to the further punishment of persons going armed or disguised in defiance of the laws of customs or excise; to the free importation of certain raw hides and skins from Ireland and the British plantations in America; and so the duties on spirits made in Scotland and imported into England.

An Act to amend an Act, made in the second year of the reign of his present majesty intituled an Act for the better preservation of the game in that part of Great Britain called England.

An Act to enlarge the powers of an Act, passed in the twenty-fifth year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled, An Act for the better saving, cleansing, repairing, lighting, and watching the highways, streets, and lanes of and in the Bill of Ramsgate, in the county of Kent, and for removing and preventing annoyances therein, and for erecting a market house, and holding a public market in the said Bill.

An Act for paving, lighting, cleansing, and otherwise improving, the streets, and other public places, within the town of Beccles, in the county of Suffolk.

An Act to amend, and render more effectual, an Act passed in the thirty-first year of the reign of his present Majesty intituled, An Act for repairing, paving, and cleansing the highways, streets, and lanes, within the town and borough of Deal, in the county of Kent, and for removing and preventing encroachments, obstructions, nuisances, and annoyances therein.

An Act for lighting and watching the streets and other public passages and places within the town of Wakefield, in the county of York, and for more effectually cleansing the same, and removing and preventing obstructions, nuisances, and annoyances therein.

An Act for paving, repairing, and cleansing the highways, streets, and lanes in the town of Folkstone and liberty thereof, in the county of Kent, and for removing and preventing nuisances and annoyances therein.

An Act for enabling the company of proprietors of the Warwick and Birmingham canal navigation to finish and complete the same, and for amending the Act of parliament passed in the thirty-third year of the reign of his present majesty for making the said canal.

An Act to vary and alter the line of the canal authorized to be made by an Act passed in the thirty-fourth year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled,

"An Act for making a navigable canal from the river Kennett, at or near the town of Newbury, in the county of Berks to the river Avon, at or near the city of Bath, and also certain navigable cuts therein described, and to amend the said river, and also to make a certain navigable cut therein also described.

An Act for making a navigable canal from the river Exe, near the town of Topsham, in the county of Devon, to the river Tone near the town of Taunton, in the county of Somerset, and for cleansing and making navigable a certain part of the said river Tone, and for making certain cuts from the said canal.

An Act to vary and alter the line of a canal authorized to be made by an Act passed in the thirty-fourth year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled,

"An Act for making and maintaining a navigable canal with certain railways and stone roads, from several collieries in the county of Somerset to communicate with the intended Kennett and Avon canal in the parish of Bradford in the county of Wilts, and to alter and amend the said Act."

An Act for making a navigable canal from or near Gain's Cross in the parish of Shillington Okeford, in the county of Dorset, to communicate with the Kennett and Avon canal at or near Widbrook, in the county of Wilts, and also a certain navigable branch from the intended canal.

An Act to enlarge the term and powers of three acts passed in the thirteenth year of King George the First, the seventeenth year of King George the second, and

and the seventh year of his present majesty, for repairing the road from Branford Bridge in the county of Middlesex, to that end of Maidenhead Bridge which lies in the county of Bucks, and for amending the road from Slough to a certain place in Eton, and from Langley Broom to Datchet Bridge in the county of Buckingham.

An Act for enlarging the term of an Act made in the fifteenth year of his present majesty for repairing the road from old Stratford, in the county of Northampton to Dunchurch in the county of Warwick.

An Act for amending and keeping in repair the road from the turnpike road in Little Yarmouth to the turnpike road at Blythburg, and also the road from Brampton to Haleworth in the county of Suffolk.

An Act for repairing and amending the road leading from Crossfield Bridge, within Stretford, in the county palatine of Lancaster, to Altrincham in the county palatine of Chester.

An Act for continuing the term, and altering and enlarging the powers of an Act passed in the sixteenth year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for repairing and widening the road from the market cross in the township of Clitheroe, to Salford Bridge, in the town of Blackburn in the county palatine of Lancaster."

An Act for enlarging the term and powers of two several Acts, passed in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, and in the fourteenth year of the reign of his present Majesty, for repairing and widening the roads from Newhall's Smithy, upon Cranage Green, through the town of Nether Knutsford, and by the South Guide Post in Mere, and Bucklow Hill, to the town of Altrineham, in the county palatine of Chester, and from the said Guide Post to Warrington, in the county of Lancaster, and from Bucklow Hill asore said to Penny's Lane near Northwich in the said county of Chester.

26th April. An Act for repealing certain duties on legacies and shares of personal estates, and for granting other duties thereon in certain cases.

An Act to indemnify such persons as have omitted to qualify themselves for offices and employments, and to indemnify justices of the peace or others, who have omitted to register or deliver in their qualifications, within the time limited by law, and for giving further time for those purposes; and to indemnify members and officers in cities, corporations, and borough towns, whose admissions have been omitted to be stamped according to law, or having been stamped have been lost or mislaid, and for allowing them time to provide admissions duly stamped; to give further time to such persons as have omitted to make and file affidavits of the execution of indentures of clerks to attornies and solicitors; and for indemnifying deputy lieutenants and officers of the militia, who have neglected to transmit descriptions of their qualifications to the clerks of the peace, within the time limited by law, and for allowing further time for that purpose.

An Act to continue the laws now in force for regulating the trade between the subjects of his majesty's dominions and the inhabitants of the territories belonging to the United States of America, so far as relates to the trade and commerce carried on between this kingdom and the inhabitants of the countries belonging to the said United States.

An Act for indemnifying all persons who have been concerned in advising, or carrying into execution, an order for his majesty in council, respecting the exportation of rock salt, for preventing suits in consequence of the same, for authorizing his majesty to prohibit the exportation or carrying coastwise, of rock salt, and for making further provisions relative thereto.

An Act for making the port of Scarborough, in the Island of Tobago, a free port, under certain regulations and restrictions.

An Act to amend an act made in the present session of parliament intituled, "an Act for allowing bounties for a limited time, on the importation into Great-Britain of any wheat, wheat flour, Indian corn, Indian meal, or rye in British ships, or other ships the property of persons of any kingdom or state in amity with his majesty, or on the delivery of the same out of warehouse for home consumption."

An Act to amend an Act made in the thirteenth year of the reign of his present

sent majesty intituled, "An Act for the more effectual preservation of the game in that part of Great-Britain called Scotland, and for repealing and amending several of the laws now in being relative thereto."

An Act for the more effectual execution of several acts of parliament made for the trials of controverted elections, or returns of members to serve in parliament.

An Act to enable his majesty to grant to John, Earl of Westmorland, his heirs and assigns, in fee simple all the estate, right, title, and interest, remaining in his majesty, in and upon the ways or walks of Sulehay, Fermes, and Shortwood, and Morehay in the forest of Rockingham, in the county of Northampton, upon a full and adequate consideration to be paid for the same.

An Act to enable his majesty to grant to Henry, Earl of Exeter, his heirs and assigns, in fee simple, all the estate, right, title and interest, remaining in his majesty in and upon the haye or walk of Westhay, in the forest of Rockingham, in the county of Northampton, upon a full and adequate consideration to be paid for the same.

An Act to enable his majesty to grant to George Finch Hatton, Esq. his heirs and assigns, in fee simple, all the estate, right, title, and interest, remaining in his majesty, in and upon the lawn of Benfield, and the bailiwick of Rockingham, in the forest of Rockingham, in the county of Northampton, upon a full and adequate compensation to be paid for the same.

An Act to regulate the making and vending of metal buttons and to prevent the purchasers thereof from being deceived in the real quality of such buttons.

An Act for further continuing and amending the several Acts passed preventing the frauds and abuses committed in the admeasurement of coals, within the city and liberty of Westminster and that part of the Duchy of Lancaster adjoining thereto, and the several parishes of St. Giles's in the Fields, and St. Mary-le bone, and such part of the parish of St. Andrew Holborn, as lies in the county of Middlesex.

An Act for enabling the commissioners for executing an Act passed in the thirty-first year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act for widening, improving, regulating, paving, cleansing, and lighting the streets, lanes, and other public passages and places, within the king's town of Maidstone, in Kent, for removing and preventing encroachments, obstructions, nuisances, and annoyances therein, for better supplying the said town with water, and for repairing the highways within the parish of Maidstone, to raise a further sum of money for completing the purposes of the said Act."

An Act for rebuilding the parish church of St. Paul, Covent-Garden, within the liberty of Westminster, in the county of Middlesex, and the vestry rooms belonging thereto, for repairing and reinstating the iron rails inclosing the site of the said church, and the gates leading thereto, and for making several regulations relating to the said parish.

An Act for making and maintaining a navigation from Morewellham Quay, in the parish of Tavistock, in the county of Devon, to Tamerton Bridge, in the parish of North Tamerton, in the county of Cornwall, and also a certain collateral cut from Pawlston Bridge, in the parish of Liffon, in the said county of Devon, to Richgrove Mill, in the parish of St. Stephen, near to the borough of Launceston, in the said county of Cornwall.

An Act for making and maintaining a navigable canal from the harbour of Aberdeen, in the parish of Aberdeen, or St. Nicholas, into the river Don, at or near the South end of the bridge over the same (adjacent to the royal burgh of Inverarie) in the parish of Kintyre, all within the county of Aberdeen, North Britain.

An Act to amend an Act of the thirtieth year of his present majesty for making and maintaining a navigable canal from Merthy in Tidville, to and through a place called the Bank, near the town of Cardiff in the county of Glamorgan, and for extending the said canal to a place called the Lower Layer, below the said town.

An Act to explain and amend an Act passed in the thirty-third year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act for making and maintaining a navigable canal from the river Siver at Shrewsbury, in the county of Salop, to the river

river Mersey, at or near Netherpool, in the county of Chester, and also for making and maintaining certain collateral cuts from the said intended canal, and for varying and altering certain parts of the Whitchurch Line of the said canal and collateral cuts; and for extending the same from Franckton common to Ferryman's bridge, in the parish of Whitchurch, in the said county of Salop, and for making and maintaining several other branches and collateral cuts to communicate therewith."

An Act to enable the company of proprietors of the Leominster canal navigation to finish and complete the same.

An Act for laying an additional tax upon the lands within the North Level, part of the great Level of the Fens, called Bedford Level, and on Portland, otherwise Great Portland, in the county of Lincoln, for the further support and preservation of the principal banks and works of the said North Level.

An Act for dividing, allotting, inclosing, draining, and preserving certain commons and waste grounds, called the Hern Common, and Gore Common, with the manor and parish of Ramsey, in the county of Huntingdon, and for repealing an Act made in the thirtieth year of the reign of his late majesty king George the second, intituled "An Act for draining and preserving certain fen lands and low grounds, in the several parishes of Ramsey, Bury, Wiston, Warboys, Farcittee, Standground, and Water Newton, in the county of Huntingdon and of Doddington, in the Isle of Ely, and county of Cambridge, and for making more effectual provision for those purposes."

An Act for enlarging the term and powers of certain Acts of parliament made for repairing the several roads in the counties of Stafford, Worcester, and Warwick, so far as relates to the road leading from a place called Sheetway in the county of Stafford, through Wolverhampton to Worsley Green Gate, and other roads therein mentioned.

An Act for continuing and enlarging the term and powers of an Act passed in the seventeenth year of his present majesty's reign for repairing and widening several roads leading to and from the towns of Bella and Dolgelly, in the county of Merioneth, and other roads therein mentioned, in the counties of Montgomery, Denbigh and Salop, and on repairing several other roads in the counties of Merioneth and Denbigh.

An Act for altering, widening, improving, and keeping in repair, the road leading from Macclesfield, by Broken Cross to Congleton, all in the county palatine of Chester.

May 14. An Act for raising the sum of seven millions five hundred thousand pounds by way of annuities.

An Act for further continuing for a limited time, an Act made in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act to enable the lord high treasurer or commissioners of the treasury for the time being, to let to farm the duties granted by an Act made in the twenty-fifth year of his present majesty's reign, on horses let to hire for travelling post and by time, to such persons as should be willing to contract for the same."

An Act for charging the duty on mahogany imported by weight.

An Act for repealing the stamp duties on licences to sell gloves and mittens by retail.

An Act for reducing the duty payable on black lead imported into this kingdom.

An Act more effectually to prevent the landing of goods, wares, and merchandise, without the presence of the proper officer; to authorise officers of the customs to convey wines laying on the quays to his majesty's warehouse, within a certain time after the landing thereof; and to require the owners of ships, vessels, or boats, licensed by the admiralty, to give security to redeliver their licences, in case any such ships, vessels, or boats shall be lost, broken up, or otherwise disposed of.

An Act for allowing the importation of melasses from any country in British ships or vessels, and in ships or vessels belonging to any state in amity with his majesty for a limited time.

An Act for the better regulation of mills.

An Act to prevent abuses and frauds in the packing, weight, and sale of butter, and to repeal certain acts relating thereto.

An Act to indemnify all persons who have acted in consequence of orders in council, issued since the twenty-second day of November, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, for the admission of certain articles of merchandize in neutral ships, and to authorise the issuing of orders in council for the like purpose, for a limited time.

An Act for further continuing for a limited time, an Act made in the thirty-second year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act for the more effectual administration of the office of a justice of the peace, in such parts of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, as lie in and near the metropolis; and for the more effectual prevention of felonies."

An Act for the further support and maintenance of curates within the church of England; and for making certain regulations respecting the appointment of such curates, and the admission of persons to cures augmented by Queen Anne's bounty with respect to the avoidance of other benefices.

An Act for the relief of persons equitably and beneficially intitled to, or interested in the several stocks and annuities transferable at the Bank of England.

An Act to explain and amend an Act, made in the last session of Parliament, and intituled "An Act for the encouragement of the mackrel fishery."

An Act for affecting the commissioners, clerks, and other officers, of the duty on salt for their salaries, and the profits of their respective offices, to the land tax, in the parish of St. Martin in the fields, within the city and liberty of Westminster, notwithstanding the said office has been removed into Somerset Place, within the Dutch Liberty, in the Strand, in the county of Middlesex.

An Act to regulate the buying and selling of hay and straw, and for repealing so much of two Acts, made in the second year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary, and in the thirty-first year of the reign of King George the second, as relate to the buying and selling of hay and straw, within the limits therein mentioned.

An Act for regulating the trade or business of pawn brokers.

An Act for amending and reducing into one act of parliament, two several acts, passed in the thirty fourth and thirty-fifth years of the reign of his present majesty, for the better ordering the militia of the city of London, and for the further regulating of the trained bands or militia of the said city.

An Act for dissolving a certain partnership, society, or undertaking, called the Million Bank, and for dividing the joint stock and funds, belonging thereto, amongst the members thereof.

An Act to amend and render more effectual an Act made in the thirty first year of his present majesty, for repairing, enlarging, and preserving the harbour of Swansea, in the county of Glamorgan, and for making improvements in the heights at the mumbles.

An Act for the better relief and employment of the poor of the several parishes within the city of Lincoln, and county of the same city, and of the parish of St. Margaret, part whereof lies within the said city, and the other part in the close of Lincoln, in the county of Lincoln.

An Act for rebuilding the parish church of St. Martin Cutwich, Threadneedle street, within the city of London.

An Act for authorizing the company of proprietors of the Warwick and Braunston canal navigation, to vary the course of a certain part of the said canal, and for amending and altering the act, made in the thirty-fourth year of the reign of his present majesty for making the said canal.

An Act to explain and amend an Act, passed in the thirty third year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act for making and maintaining a navigable canal from the river Severn, at Shrewsbury, in the county of Salop, to the river Mersey, at or near Netherpool, in the county of Chester, and also for making and maintaining certain collateral cuts from the said intended canal, and for varying and altering certain parts of the course of the said canal and collateral cuts between Ruabon and Chester, and for making and maintaining several other branches and collateral cuts to communicate therewith."

An

An Act to enable his majesty, in right of his Dutchy of Lancaster, to make a grant of certain lands, for the purpose of carrying into execution an Act passed in the thirty-second year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act for making and maintaining a navigable canal, from Kirkby-Kendal in the county of Westmorland, to West Houghton, in the county palatine of Lancaster, and also a navigable branch from the said intended canal at or near Berwick, to or near Warton Cragg, and also another navigable branch from at or near Gale Moss, by Chorley, to or near Duxbury, in the said county palatine of Lancaster."

An Act for widening, deepening, enlarging, altering and improving the haven of the town and port of Great Grimsby, in the county of Lincoln.

An Act for the more effectual banking, draining, preserving and improving, certain low lands and grounds, lying and being in the several parishes and townships of Everton, Scaftworth, Grinley on the Hill, Miferton, and Walkeringham, in the county of Nottingham.

An Act for draining and improving, and for inclosing, dividing, and allotting certain tracts of common and waste lands, called Marshland Smeeth, and Marshland Fen, lying within the county of Marshland, in the county of Norfolk, and for stinting and regulating the stockings, feeding, and depasturing of the said Smeeth and Fen, until the inclosure, division, and allotment thereof.

An Act for dividing, allotting, inclosing, draining, embanking, and improving the open and common fields, ings, meadows, pastures, and other commonable lands and waste grounds, within the several townships of Morton, Walkersith, East Stockwith, Bliton, Wharton, Pilham, and Gilby, in the several parishes of Gainfborough, Blighton, and Pilham, in the county of Lincoln.

An Act for building a bridge over the river Kolin, at or near Northam, within the liberties of the town and county of the town of Southampton, and for making a road from the said town to the said bridge, and from thence to communicate with the bridge leading from the west end to Botley in the county of Southampton.

An Act for continuing the term and altering and enlarging the powers of an Act passed in the twenty-eighth year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act for enlarging the term of an Act, made in the second year of the reign of his present majesty, for repairing and widening the roads from a certain place near Bolton in the Moors, to Leigh, and from thence to the guide-post, near Golbourne Dale, and to the South end of Newton bridge, and from the said guide-post to Winwick, and from Newton by Parr Stocks, to the guide-post in Parr, in the county palatine of Lancaster, and for making more effectual provision for repairing and widening the said roads, except from the guide-post near Galbourne Dale to Winwick."

An Act to enlarge the term and powers of an Act, passed in the fourteenth year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An Act for repairing and widening the several roads near the towns of Hockerton, Kirklington, well, Normanto, and Winkbourne, in the county of Nottingham, and for amending, widening, and keeping in repair, the road branching out of the said roads, in the village of Kirklington to the Street Gate Road, the Newark and Southwell turnpike road at Great Bridge, all in the county of Nottingham."

May 28. An Act for granting to his Majesty a certain sum of money to be raised by a lottery.

An Act for granting to his Majesty the sum of two hundred thousand pounds to be issued and paid to the Governor and Company of the Bank of England to be by them placed to the account of the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt.

An Act to amend an Act, made in the last session of parliament intituled, "An Act to amend an Act made in the thirty-second year of the reign of his present Majesty intituled an Act for regulating the allowance of the drawback and payment of the bounty on the exportation of sugar, and permitting the importation of sugar and coffee into the Bahama and Bermuda islands in foreign ships, and for reducing the bounty on refined sugars exported in any other than British ships."

An Act for continuing the encouragement and reward of persons making certain discoveries for finding the longitude at sea, or making other useful discoveries and improvements in navigation, and for making experiments relating thereto.

An Act to continue several laws therein mentioned, relating to the better encouragement of the making of jail cloathing in Great Britain; to the encouraging the manufacture of British fail cloth, and securing the duties on foreign fail cloth imported; to securing the duties upon foreign made fail cloth, and charging foreign made fails with a duty; and to the allowing a bounty on the exportation of British made cordage.

An Act further to continue an Act, made in the thirty-third year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for establishing regulations respecting aliens arriving in this kingdom or resident therein, in certain cases."

An Act for permitting the carrying coast wise of lime, limestone, dung, and other articles of manure, without taking out sufferance, transire or let pass.

An Act to prevent unlawful combinations of workmen employed in the paper manufactory.

An Act to authorise the sale of fish at Billingsgate by retail.

An Act for authorizing his Majesty to order the registering, and the granting certificates of registry to certain ships and vessels, the property of his Majesty's subjects, which had belonged to, or been in possession of the enemy, and concerning which doubts have arisen whether they are intitled to be registered according to the existing laws in that behalf.

An Act for enabling the East India Company to perform an engagement entered into by them with William Sabatier, gentleman, respecting the importation of cotton from the East Indies.

An Act for allowing the importation of arrow root from the British plantations and also of linseed cakes, and rape cakes, from any foreign country in British built ships; owned, navigated, and registered according to law, without payment of duty.

An Act to explain and amend an Act passed in the thirty-third year of his present Majesty's reign, intituled, "An Act to provide for the families of persons chosen by lot to serve in the militia of this kingdom, and of substitutes serving therein, and to explain and amend an Act of parliament passed in the twenty-sixth year of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for amending and reducing into one Act of parliament the laws relating to the militia in that part of Great Britain called England."

An Act to enforce the due execution of an Act passed in the last session of parliament intituled, "An Act for raising a certain number of men in the several counties in England, for the service of his Majesty's navy."

An Act to exempt dairies and rooms used solely for making, keeping and drying cheese and butter, from the duties of windows and lights.

An Act for making allowances in certain cases to subaltern officers in the time of peace.

An Act to enable the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies to purchase certain houses and ground contiguous to the East India House, and to widen the north end of Lime-street.

An Act for further continuing the duty of one farthing per chaldron on coals, granted by an Act passed in the first year of the reign of Queen Anne, and revived and continued by two Acts, passed in the eighth year of the reign of King George the Second, and in the sixth year year of the reign of his present Majesty, for improving and repairing the piers and harbour of Whitby in the county of York.

An Act to continue the term, and alter and enlarge the powers of an Act passed in the seventeenth year of his present majesty, intituled, "An Act for repairing and widening the road from Hall Gate Close, at the south west end of the town of Bedford to the town of Ampthill, and from the said town of Ampthill to Wooburn Park, in the county of Bedford; and also the road branching out of the same, in Kempston field to the turnpike road leading from Hitchen to the said town of Bedford, except so far as the same relates to the road leading from the south end of Ridgmont Town to the entrance of Wooburn Park, at a place called the Red Lodges, and for making and maintaining a road from the south
end

end of Ridgemont town aforesaid, through Hufborn Crawley, to the north end of the town of Wooburn, and for discontinuing the said part of the said road leading from the south end of Ridgemont to the Red Lodges aforesaid, and also for discontinuing the highway from thence through the said Park, to where it joins the road leading from Wooburn to Everholt, all in the same county of Bedford.

May 19. An Act for granting to his Majesty additional duties on foreign wines, and British spirits, and on foreign wines sold by auction.

An Act for granting to his Majesty a certain sum of money out of the consolidated fund, for the service of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six; and for further appropriating the supplies granted in this session of parliament.

An Act for granting to his Majesty certain duties on dogs.

An Act for granting annuities to satisfy certain navy victualling and transport Bills.

An Act for the better collection of the duty on hats.

An Act for enabling the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, to purchase ground for building warehouses upon, and to make a new street from Petticoat-lane to White-street, instead of Gravel-lane in Petticoat-lane.

An Act for raising, maintaining, and keeping in repair, the road from the north end of the Bridge, commonly called Old Trent Bridge, to the west end of St. Mary's Church-yard, by way of Hollow Stone, in the parish of St. Mary in the town of Nottingham; and for erecting and maintaining such and so many flood bridges upon the said road as may be necessary to carry off the flood water, and for widening and improving the entrance into the town of Nottingham, by way of Hollow Stone.

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

APPENDIX.

MESSAGE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY OF FRANCE.

REPUBLIQUE FRANCAISE.

*Message du Directoire adressé au
Conseil des Anciens le 5 Pluviose,
et lu en Comité Secret.*

CITOYENS LEGISLATEURS,

Des ennemis de la France ont parlé de paix, mais c'étoit pour relentir nos préparatifs, pendant qu'eux-mêmes redoublent d'efforts pour continuer la guerre : ils vouloient affaiblir le courage de nos défenseurs, en les berçant, d'une pacification prochaine, qu'eux-mêmes ne cessent d'é luder par des formes év asives et des prétextes frivoles. Cette perfidie, de leur part, n'est pas nouvelle, et les bruits qu'ils ont affecté de répandre à ce sujet, depuis le commencement des hostilités, n'ont jamais manqué de être saisis et accredités par la faction de l'étranger, qu'ils entretiennent au milieu de nous. Mais ces manœuvres n'ont point garanti les mesures du Directoire Exécutif, et tout en offrant la Paix aux Puissances Coalisées, à des conditions aussi modérées que peut le comporter la dignité Nationale, il n'a rien négligé pour assurer des nouveaux triomphes aux armes républicaines.

Les Français doivent favoir qu'ils n'auront la paix avec leurs ennemis que lorsqu'ils auront mis ceux-ci dans l'impossibilité de poursuivre leurs projets désastreux. Cette époque n'est pas éloignée, elle doit couronner une campagne vigoureuse, et nous avons lieu de croire que celle qui va s'ouvrir ne le cédera point à celle de l'an 3. Déjà la consistance qu'acquiert chaque jour le gouvernement ; l'accord desespérant pour les ennemis intérieurs, qui existe entre le corps législatif et le directoire ; la circulation des denrées qui commence à se rétablir ; l'empressement des jeunes citoyens à rejoindre leurs drapeaux ; l'activité générale

FRENCH REPUBLIC:

*Message from the Directory, addressed
to the Council of Elders, dated 5
Pluviose (Jan. 25,) and read in a
Secret Committee.*

CITIZENS LEGISLATORS,

Enemies of France have spoken of peace, but it was to relax our preparations, while they themselves redoubled their efforts for continuing the war : they wished to weaken the courage of our defenders, by lulling them with the hopes of approaching peace, which they themselves have not ceased to elude, by evasive forms and frivolous pretexts. This perfidy, on their part, is not new, and the reports they have affected to circulate on this subject, from the commencement of hostilities, have never failed to be seized on and believed by the foreign faction, which they maintain among us. But these manœuvres have never influenced the measures of the Executive Directory, who, even in offering peace to the Coalced Powers, on conditions as moderate as are consistent with the national dignity, have neglected nothing for assuring new triumphs to the republican arms.

The French should know that they will not have peace with their enemies till they shall have rendered it impossible for them to pursue their disastrous projects. This epoch is not far off ; it must crown a vigorous campaign, and we have reason to believe that which is about to be opened will yield in nothing to that of the 3d year. Already the consistency which the government daily acquires—the concord (to the despair of our internal enemies) which subsists between the Legislative Body and the Directory—the circulation of provisions which begins to be re-established—the anxiety of the young citizens to rejoin their standards—the general activity of the

rale des contribuables à seconder la mesure salutaire et décisive de l'emprunt force ; la certitude enfin de voir toutes les factions pour suivies, soit que leur royalisme demeure à découvert, soit qu'elles en dissimulent l'arrière-pensée sous les formes anarchiques ; tout enfin nous annonce que si nous sommes forcés par d'implacables ennemis à couvrir encore de nos soldats leurs plaines en anglantées, ce sera pour venir bientôt, couverts de nouveaux lauriers, jouir du repos, désormais inaltérable, qu'assurent la constitution jurée par tous les Français, le retour de la morale et de la justice, l'amour du travail et de l'économie. Ce qui rend, vous le savez, citoyens législateurs, le service si pénible en ce moment, malgré les ressources prodigieuses qui existent encore dans la république, c'est l'absence des signes représentatifs d'échange, enfouis par la cupidité, qui ôte la possibilité de faire les approvisionnements nécessaires aux armées ; il faut donc un moyen d'y suppléer, et la directorie n'en apperçoit aucun que la levée en nature de l'objet, au moins, qui, dans ce moment, est le plus urgent et le plus indispensable ; ce lui des chevaux, tant de trait que de remonte.

La principale cause du peu de succès de la campagne dernière, fut le défaut presque absolu de moyens de transports, et la supériorité des ennemis en cavalerie. Le mal ne fait, qu'augmenter chaque jour, et nous sommes obligés de vous dire, citoyens législateurs, que s'il n'est pris, à cet égard, une mesure aussi prompte qu'efficace, nous devons nous attendre à des revers. Le directoire demande que vous l'autorisiez à faire la levée du trentième cheval dans toute l'étendue de la république ; l'expérience assure le succès de cette mesure ; tout autre ne peut donner que des résultats douteux, tardifs, entraînant à des dépenses excessives, et à la sortie d'une quantité prodigieuse de numéraire.

Le directoire ne s'est déterminé à faire au corps législatif la proposition, d'une levée extraordinaire de chevaux, qu'après l'avoir long-tems méditée et s'être bien pénétré qu'il n'existe point d'autres moyens d'assurer le service.

the contributors to second the salutary and decisive measure of the forced loan ; the certainty, in short, of seeing all the factions punished, whether their royalism be discovered, whether they dissemble the last breath of it under the forms of anarchy—every thing, in short, announced that, if we are forced by our implacable enemies to cover again their bloody plains with our soldiers, it will be to return speedily, covered with new laurels, to enjoy thenceforward the unalterable repose that is assured by the constitution, sworn to by all Frenchmen, and the return of morality and justice, the love of labour and economy. Citizens Legislators, you are aware that what renders the service so painful in the present moment, notwithstanding the prodigious resources which are still to be found in the republic, is the absence of the representative signs of exchange, swallowed up by that avarice, which renders it impossible to provide the necessary supplies for the armies. We must devise some substitute, and the Directory can perceive no other except that of raising in kind that article at least which is at present most necessary and indispensable, viz. horses both for draught and saddle.

The principal cause of the little success of the last campaign was the almost total want of means of conveyance, and the superiority of our enemy's cavalry. The evil must increase every day, and we are obliged to tell you, Citizen Legislators, that if there is not taken in this respect, a measure prompt and efficacious, we must expect defeats. The Directory requests that you will authorise it to raise the thirtieth horse in all the extent of the republic. Experience assures the success of this measure ; all others will only have doubtful consequences, slow, and bringing with them excessive expences, and the sending out a prodigious quantity of specie.

The Directory has not formed the determination to make the Legislative Body the proposition of an extraordinary levy of horses till after the subject had been long considered, and that there were well convinced that there existed no other means of ensuring the service.

Cette

Cette levée seroit faite par les corps administratifs. Le corps législatif peut statuer lui-même sur le mode d'exécution, au l'abandonné au directoire, qui suivra le plus économique et le moins onéreux possible aux citoyens ; mais quelque parti que vous adoptiez à cet égard les circonstances exigent que cette mesure ne soit point différée.

Citoyens législateurs, le directoire invite le conseil à prendre l'objet de la demande dans la plus haute et la plus prompte considération.

REUBELL, President.

This levy shall be made by the Administrative Bodies. The Legislative Body may itself enact the mode of the execution, or leave it to the Directory who will follow the means most economical and the least vexatious to the citizens ; whatever decision you may make in this respect, circumstances require that this measure be not deferred.

Citizens Legislators, the Directory invites the Council to take the object of its demand into the most serious and the most prompt consideration.

REUBELL, President.

Note transmitted to M. Barthelemy, by Mr. Wickham, March 8, 1796.

THE undersigned, his Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary to the Swiss Cantons, is authorised to convey to Monsi. Barthelemy, the desire of his Court to be made acquainted, through him, with the dispositions of France in regard to the object of a general pacification. He therefore requests Monsi. Barthelemy to transmit to him in writing (and after having made the necessary inquiries) his answer to the following questions.

I. Is there the disposition in France to open a negotiation with his Majesty and his Allies for the re-establishment of a general peace, upon just and suitable terms, by sending, for that purpose, Ministers, to a congress, at such place as may hereafter be agreed upon ?

II. Would there be the disposition to communicate to the undersigned the general grounds of a pacification, such as France would be willing to propose ; in order that his Majesty and his Allies might thereupon examine in concert, whether they are such as might serve as the foundation of a negotiation for peace ?

III. Or would there be a desire to propose any other way whatever, for arriving at the same end, that of a general pacification ?

The undersigned is authorised to receive from Monsi. Barthelemy the answer to these questions, and to transmit it to his Court ; but he is not in any manner authorised to enter with him into negotiation, or discussion upon these subjects.

Berne, March 8, 1796.

(Signed) W. WICKHAM.

Note transmitted to Mr. Wickham, by Mr. Barthelemy, March 26, 1796.

THE undersigned, Ambassador of the French Republic to the Helvetic Body, has transmitted to the Executive Directory the note which Mr. Wickham, his Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary to the Swiss Cantons, was pleased to convey to him, dated the eighth of March. He has it in command to answer it by an exposition of the sentiments and dispositions of the Executive Directory.

The Directory ardently desires to procure for the French Republic a just, honourable, and solid peace. The step taken by Mr. Wickham would have afforded to the Directory a real satisfaction, if the declaration itself which that minister makes, of his not having any order, or any power to negotiate, did not give room to doubt of the sincerity of the pacific intentions of his court. In fact, if it was true that England be, as to know her real interests, that she wished to open again for herself the sources of abundance and prosperity ; if she fought for peace with good faith ; would she propose a congress, of which the necessary result must be to render all negotiation endless ? Or would she confine herself to the asking in a vague manner that the French government should point out any other way, whatever, for attaining the same object, that of a general pacification ?

Is it that this step has had no other object than to obtain for the British government the favourable impression which always accompanies the first overtures for peace? May it not have been accompanied with the hope that they would produce no effect?

However that may be, the Executive Directory, whose policy has no other guides than openness and good faith, will follow in its explanations, a conduct which shall be wholly conformable to them. Yielding to the ardent desire by which it is animated to procure peace for the French Republic and for all nations, it will not fear to declare itself openly. *Charged by the constitution with the execution of the laws, it cannot make or listen to any proposal that would be contrary to them. The constitutional act does not permit it to consent to any alienation of that which, according to the existing laws, constitutes the territory of the Republic.* [Chargé par la constitution de l'exécution des lois, il ne peut faire ou entendre aucune proposition qui y serait contraire. L'acte constitutionnel ne lui permet de consentir à aucune alienation de ce, qui, d'après les lois existantes, constitue le territoire de la République.]

With respect to the countries occupied by the French armies, and which have not been united to France, they, as well as other interests, political and commercial, may become the subject of a negotiation, which will present to the Directory the means of proving how much it desires to attain speedily to a happy pacification.

The Directory is ready to receive, in this respect, any overtures that shall be just, reasonable, and compatible with the dignity of the Republic.

Bryse, the 6th of Germinal, the 4th year of the French Republic (16th March, 1796.)

(Signed)

BARTHELEMY.

NOTE.

The Court of London has received from its minister in Switzerland, the answer made to the questions which he had been charged to address to Monsieur Barthelemy, in respect to the opening of a negotiation for the re-establishment of general tranquillity.

This Court has seen, with regret, how far the tone and spirit of that answer, the nature and extent of the demands which it contains, and the manner of announcing them, are remote from any dispositions for peace.

The inadmissible pretension is there avowed of appropriating to France all that the laws actually existing there may have comprised under the denomination of French territory. To a demand such as this is added an express declaration, that no proposal contrary to it will be made, or even listened to; and this, under the pretence of an internal regulation, the provisions of which are wholly foreign to all other nations.

While these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the King but to prosecute a war equally just and necessary.

Whenever his enemies shall manifest more pacific sentiments, his majesty will at all times be eager to concur in them, by leading himself, in concert with his allies, to all such measures as shall be best calculated to re-establish general tranquillity on conditions just, honourable, and permanent: either by the establishment of a congress, which has been so often, and so happily the means of restoring peace to Europe; or by a preliminary discussion of the principles which may be proposed, on either side, as a foundation of a general pacification; or, lastly, by an impartial examination of any other way which may be pointed out to him for arriving at the same salutary end.

Downing-street, April 10, 1796.

Copy of the Rescript which the Emperor sent to Baron de Hugel, in answer to the letter of congratulation of the Diet of Ratibon, on account of his Imperial Majesty's victories.

"**W**E have perused the contents of the letter of congratulation and of thanks which the General Diet has very humbly addressed to us under the date of the 27th ult. This solemn expression of the most lively gra-

titude

titude for the extraordinary sacrifices, and the generous efforts which we have made, for the energetic and persevering assistance which we have furnished, and for our indefatigable solicitude for the safety and preservation of the country and constitution of the German empire—the noble and patriotic expression of the sincere part which the Diet takes in the brilliant and ever memorable victories which we have obtained, under the protection of the most high, by our unconquerable firmness, and the bravery of our armies, have excited in us the most agreeable sentiments. We order you, in consequence, to testify, in our name, to the General Diet of the Empire, our satisfaction as Supreme Chief of the Germanic Body.

“The fate of Germany would have been decided by the loss of the richest, most populous, and most considerable provinces, if the enemy, full of confidence in their project of schism, tending to favour the full execution of their plan of aggrandizement and conquest, had succeeded in striking the last blow which they were preparing against the German Empire.

“We explained ourselves in a very detailed manner on this subject, according to the importance of the object, in the decree of commission which we sent to the Diet on the 19th of November, last year; we join to it the very remarkable proclamation of the representative of the French people, Merlin of Thionville, to the inhabitants of the left bank of the Rhine, of which we have just received information.

“This proclamation furnishes a new and irrefragable proof of the formal and decided project of the enemy to take all the left bank of the Rhine as the boundaries of their conquests, and to lay as a basis for the approaching peace the dismemberment of that part of the Body Politic of Germany. The victories gained by my generals since the middle of October, are so much the more important, inasmuch as they have turned aside the mortal blow directed against the Empire of Germany and the constitution.

“At the same time it results from the faithful exposure of the actual state of the political relations contained in the decree of ratification, and principally in the reply of the Committee of Public Safety, to the first overtures of peace made by us, in our name, and in that of the Empire, that it is the decided expression of patriotism, harmony, warlike valour, and perseverance, that can alone bring the enemy to a just and permanent peace; and it is only with arms in our hands that we can accelerate the peace of the empire, which we so ardently desire.

“However agreeable the solemn expression of the gratitude and congratulations that have been expressed to us may be, we shall think it proper, nevertheless, to set very strict limits to the just confidence, which we have in the patriotism of the states of the empire, if in the part which they take on one hand, in the glorious victories gained, and on the other, in every thing that may assure the preservation and prosperity of Germany, we do not recognize the conviction of the indispensable necessity and the renewal of the constitutional assurance, of co-operating with the greatest energy in this so important and decisive moment, by the general union and the most vigorous exercise of all the armed force of Germany, in the defence and support of the country, and in the preservation of its liberty and constitution; and this for the purpose of accelerating a peace, which shall not dishonour the German name, and of putting an end to all the inevitable burdens and evils of a war to which the Empire was forced.

“No one can misunderstand the rectitude of our views in these sentiments, which we manifest with confidence, in our quality of supreme head of the empire, and which you will communicate, without delay, to the counsellors, ambassadors, and ministers of the General Diet of the Empire.”

Given at Vienna, Dec. 21, 1795.

Copy of the Answer which the Palatine Ambassador, Count de Tattenbach, received on the twenty-seventh of January, to his complaint made to the Emperor, against the disarming of the troops of the Palatinate.

“THE Emperor cannot decide in this cause, as the disarming of the troops was only in consequence of the scandalous surrender of Mannheim,

STATE PAPERS.

heim, and the inimical behaviour of the garrison of that place to the troops of his majesty, on whose arrival they had drawn up the bridge, denied them the passage through the town, &c. The termination of the inquiry into this cause must be waited for; and it depends entirely upon the Elector to accelerate obtaining the satisfaction he demands, by a speedy termination of the trial of those persons who caused the capitulation and surrender of the place. Concerning the demands made by Count Wurmser, which are also a part of the complaint, his Majesty desires the Elector to consider that an army, forced by circumstances to march to a country where they never thought their presence would be required, could not carry their magazines with them; and that therefore, they had no reason to complain of contributions which were of the utmost necessity, without which the army must have perished, and which were but a small compensation, compared with what would have been lost if the country had fallen into the hands of a desolating enemy; his majesty had however given orders, that every thing which either had been, or should in future be delivered to the Imperial army, should be paid for, and an agreement about the price made with the government of the palatinate. Concerning the contribution which Count Wurmser demanded of the city of Mannheim, his Imperial Majesty must confess, that he had given no orders to that purpose; but as it is customary to give some marks of gratitude to troops who take a fortress, especially when this is accompanied with great loss and danger, his Majesty thinks the inhabitants of Mannheim should willingly impelled by gratitude to their deliverers, have given the 100,000 florins, which were raised to be distributed among them. The payment of the sum of 200,000 florins more, which was made afterwards, should not be immediately insisted upon. His Majesty had given orders to Field Marshall Wurmser not to interfere in the civil government, though his Majesty had a right to keep the place till a peace shall be concluded, and to treat it in the same manner as any other conquered place. It would, however, be expected, that his Electoral Highness would appoint such persons for the management of public affairs, as were not suspected of acting contrary to the intentions of his Imperial Majesty for the public welfare."

GENERAL INDEX

TO

WOODFALL'S PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS,

SIXTH SESSION, SEVENTEENTH PARLIAMENT, OCT. 29th
1795, to MAY 19, 1796.

* * The Roman Numerals refer to the Volume, and the Figures to the Page.

ABINGDON, Earl of, on Treason Bill, i. 163. 259. On Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 395. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 485.

Abbot, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 188. Gives notice of moving for Committee on expiring laws, iv. 47. Moves, iv. 78.

Acts Publick, list of all those that have passed in the session, iv. 591.

Adair, Mr. Serjeant, on Breach of Privilege in publishing Pamphlet intitled "Thoughts on Government, i. 427, 428, 445, ii. 29. 234. On Petition of Merchants and Bankers, i. 466. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 43. On Slave Trade, iii. 97. 296. 348. 349. 441. On Bill for anatomizing Burglars, iii. 401. On Negroes, iv. 60. 69. On Expiring Laws Committee, iv. 79. On Mr. Manning's Petition relative to Stamps on Bill of Exchange, iv. 164. Presents Petition from Quakers for relief with respect to tythes, iv. 165. Notice upon it, 166. Introduces Bill, iv. 220. 235. 352. 362. 466. 520. 576, 577. Curates Maintenance Bill, iv. 360, 361.

Addington, Mr. W. on the Sedition and Treason Bills, i. 513. On Slave Trade, iii. 109, 347.

Address, of House of Lords, on Outrage on the King and King's Speech, i. 5, 54. 99, 100. Presented, i. 98.

Accounts, relative to Flour and Corn, Appendix vol. i. 61, 60. 110. Of net Produce of Customs in England and Scotland paid into Exchequer up to October 10, 1795, Appendix vol. i. 118. Net Produce of Stamp Duties, Incidents, Excise, &c. up to October 10, 1795, Appendix vol. i. 123 to 127. Extraordinary Expences of Army, Appendix vol. ii. 3 to 36. Of Pay, Cloathing and allowances of Volunteer Local Corps, &c. and other Army Accounts, Appendix vol. ii. 37 to 57. Army Extraordinaries up to December 24, 1795, Appendix vol. iii. 87 to 98. Produce of Duties for Payment of Annuities &c, Appendix vol. iii. 81 to 86. Produce of duties for payment of annuities, &c. Appendix 87 to 98. Produce of Taxes up to April 5, 1796, Appendix vol. iii. 99. Value of Exports and Imports in last ten years, 101 to 109. Extraordinary Expences of Army up to 24 December 1795, not provided for by Parliament, 110 to 114.

GENERAL INDEX.

Agreement between individual Members of both Houses to reduce the price of Wheat in their respective families during high price of Wheat, ii. 457.

Albemarle, Earl of, notice of Motion respecting Pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on the English Government, ii. 91. Lays the Pamphlet on the Table, ii. 126. Moves that is a breach of Privilege, ii. 127.

Allardyce Mr., on Scotch Cavalry, ii. 2.

Amyatt, Mr., presents Petition from Southampton, ii. 34.

Aucafter, Duke of, presents Petition from Lincoln, ii. 213.

Anderson, Mr. Alderman, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 235, 236, ii. 212. On Petition from Aldersgate Ward, ii. 38. 106. Brings up two Bills relative to Charters of Royal Exchange and London Insurance Offices, ii. 153. Moves for leave to bring in Bill to protect the Merchants, Bankers and Traders from depredations of their Clerks, &c. ii. 149. Presents a Petition from Million Bank, iii. 16. Moves for leave to bring in Bill, iii. 74. Moves for leave to bring in Bill for relief of Coalheavers, iv. 189.

Annesley, Mr., presents Petition from Reading in favour of Treason and Seditious Meeting Bills, i. 402.

Answer received by Palatine Embassador, on his complaint made to the Emperor, Appendix vol. iv. 7.

Anstruther, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 325. ii. 113, 114. On Treason Bill, ii. 90.

Answer to Address on King's Speech, i. 99, 100.

Arden, Lord, moves navy (Seamen and Marines) i. 125. Moves for Instructions to Committee to introduce clause to enable officers of the marine to enlist men for that service from the marching regiments, &c. beyond Seas, iii. 8. On Caldon Canal Bill, iii. 511.

Army Estimates, ii. 102.

Army Extraordinaries, ii. 214.

Army, Accounts of, Appendix vol. i. 123. vol. ii. 37.

Attorney General, (Sir John Scott), on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 286. ii. 112. On Breach of Privilege (Thoughts on Government) i. 428, 447. ii. 9. On Call of the House, i. 462. On the two Bills, i. 478. On Treason Bill, ii. 61. 107. 416. On York Petition, ii. 227. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 247. On Bill for Burglars, iii. 403. On Collateral Succession Bill, iii. 502. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 369, 423.

Auckland, Lord, on his Grant of Pension, ii. 92. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 301, 303. On Game Laws, iii. 338. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 340. On Conduct of Administration (Marquis of Landsdown's Motion) iv. 306. On Finance, (Earl of Lauderdale's Motion) iv. 552.

B.

Baker, Mr. on Treason Bill, ii. 89.

Barracks, accounts of Expenditure upon, Appendix vol. ii. 82 to 95.

Barnham, Mr. on Breach of Privilege, i. 436. On Treason Bill, ii. 18, 89. On Slave Trade, iii. 110. 346. On Maroon War in West Indies, iii. 484, 485. On Slave Carrying Bill, iv. 226.

Baring, Sir Francis, on high price of Bread, i. 120. 376. 379. On his Majesty's Message relative to sale of Dutch Prizes, ii. 236. On Loan, ii. 270. 290. On Budget, ii. 282. On Bread ii. 552. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 247.

Barker, Mr. on Bill to regulate conveyance of Writs, ii. 545.

Barthelemy, M. his Answer to Mr. Wickham's Notification, Appendix vol. iv. 5.

Basset Sir Francis, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 302. 360. On Scarcity of Corn, i. 376. In Conversation on Petitions, i. 497, 498. Presents Petition from Redruth in favour of Bills, ii. 235. On Millers Toll Regulation Bill, iii. 476.

Bastard, Mr. on real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 471. 421.

Banks, Mr. on report from Corn Committee, ii. 450. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 45.

Bath,

GENERAL INDEX.

- Baib*, petition from, upon Treason and Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 310.
- Bedford, Duke of*, on King's Speech, i. 59. 92, 93. On Treason Bill, i. 136. 142. 143. 165. 213. 214. 244. 245. 251. 259. In Committee on the Bill, i. 217. 219. Presents Petitions from Plymouth Dock, Stonehouse, Frome, Durham and Newcastle against the Bills, ii. 296. Petition from Bedford, ii. 384. 385. On Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 395. 396. Presents Petition from 17,000 persons, Guardians of Constitutional Liberty, ii. 447. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 465. On High Price of Corn, ii. 541. 542. 543. 544. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 342. On change of System (Lord Guildford's Motion) iv. 443. 445. 465.
- Belgrave Lord*, Presents Petition from respectable Inhabitants of Chester, in favour of Treason and Seditious Meeting Bills, i. 408. Petition from Chester, ii. 47. On Army Estimates, ii. 139.
- Berkeley, Captain*, on General Inclosure Bill, iv. 188. On Longitude iv. 268. On Game Laws, iv. 269.
- Bill for Safety of his Majesty's Person, &c.* i. 127.
- Blackburn, Mr.* petition from Merchants, &c. of Liverpool, ii. 47.
- Bouverie, Mr.* on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 200. On Treason Bill, ii. 410. On Slave Trade, iii. 347. On Newspaper Conveyance Bill, iv. 219. On Motion for expulsion of Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 350.
- Borrington Lord*, on Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 311.
- Branding, Mr.* on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 223. On Breach of Privilege, (Thoughts on Government) i. 434. On Call of the House, i. 462. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 225.
- Breach of Privilege*, i. 421.
- Bridport Admiral Lord*, Answer to Thanks of the House, i. 104.
- Bristol City of*, Petition against Treason and Sedition Bills, i. 406. 407.
- Browne, Mr. Isaac Hawkins*, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 235. 239. On Treason Bill, ii. 89. 409. On Budget, ii. 282. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 120. On Petition on Dr. John Hunter's Museum, iii. 226. On Game Laws, iii. 406. On Westminster Police, iv. 206. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 235. On Curates Maintenance Bill, iv. 361. On real Succession Bill, iv. 372.
- Budget (first)* ii. 237. Resolutions of. Appendix, vol. ii. 69.
- Bunbury Sir Charles*, on Bill for Relief of the Poor, i. 488.
- Burdon, Mr.* on Breach of Privilege, (Thoughts on Government) i. 415. Presents Petition from Sunderland against the Bills, ii. 213. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 225. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate price of labour, ii. 342. iii. 37. On Durham Petition, ii. 396. On Dog Tax, iii. 15.
- Burton, Mr.* on Scarcity of Corn, i. 374. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 117.
- Burrell, Sir Peter*, on Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 45. On Bread, ii. 553.
- On Corn Committee, ii. 487. 563.
- Buller, Mr.* on real Succession Bill, iv. 419.
- Buxton, Mr.* on King's Speech, i. 21. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 200. On Breach of Privilege, i. 423. ii. 28. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate Price of Labour, iii. 36. On Game Laws, ii. 70. 327. 335. 405. 472. iv. 271. Scarcity of Corn, iii. 72. 263. 265. On Slave Trade, ii. 86. 348. On culture of Potatoes, iii. 229. On Dog Tax, iv. 9. 198. 233. On Pewter Pot Bill, iv. 157. On Bill to enforce bringing Corn to Market, iv. 518.
- Byng, Mr.* on Meeting of Freeholders of Middlesex at Hackney, i. 464.
- On Tolls and Turnpikes Regulation, iii. 295.
- Caernarvon, Earl of*, in Committee on Treason Bill, i. 212. On Earl of Guildford's Motion for Change of system, iv. 444.
- Carlisle, Earl of*, on Adjournment of Debate on Earl of Guildford's Motion, iv. 444.
- Canning, Mr.* on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 225. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 418. 419. On Newspaper Conveyance Bill, iv. 218. 219.
- Canterbury, Archb. of*, on Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 579.

GENERAL INDEX.

- Cavendish, Lord George*, on Succession to real Estates Bills, iv. 416.
Cawthorne, Colonel, on his Sentence and Proceedings of the Court Martial, iv. 329.
Carew, Mr. Poole, on Horse Tax, ii. 564.
Clarence Duke of, on Slave Trade, iii. 277.
Chancellor, Lord, on King's Speech, i. 87, 88, 89. In Committee on Treason Bill, i. 205, 207, 211, 212, 217. On the Earl of Lauderdale's Motion for Papers, i. 241. On Order ii. 94, 97. On Libel ii. 120. On Lincoln Petition, ii. 293. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 327, 482, 483, 484. On Edinburgh Petition, ii. 444. Informs the House that he has received a letter from Admiral Cornwallis, on receiving intimation of their Lordships Thanks, ii. 569. On Vote of Credit, iii. 322. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 342. On Marquis of Lansdown's Speech on Papers, iii. 508. On Debtor and Creditor Bill, iv. 211. On Conduct of Administration iv. 322, 324. On Earl of Guildford's Motion iv. 460. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 580.
Chancellor of the Exchequer, on King's Speech, i. 37, 51. On Message from Lords on Outrage on the King, i. 53. On Answer to Message i. 95. On Scarcity of Corn i. 95, 96. Moves Supply, 101. On high price of Bread, i. 104, 115, 118, 120. Introduces Bill for preventing Seditious Meetings and Assemblies, i. 167. On Call of the House, i. 201, 202. ii. 338, 339. On motion of Adjournment, i. 221, 224. On Bill, i. 224, 300, 297, 299, 360. ii. 40, 42. On Treason Bill, i. 268, 269, 453, 455, 460. ii. 87, 88, 89, 90, 424, 452. On Order, i. 299. Proposes Bounties on Importation of Corn, i. 373, 375, 376, 378. On Returns of Land Forces, i. 388. On Army Estimates, i. 395, 396, 397, 400. ii. 148. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 420. On Breach of Privilege, i. 423, 426, 427, 433, 448. ii. 18, 108, 232, 234. On Petition of Bankers and Merchants, i. 469. On Publicans Petition, i. 485. On Westminster Petition, ii. 36. Gives Notice of Budget, ii. 48. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 111, 116, 117, 163, 348, 517, 519. On Army Estimates, ii. 147. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 219, 223, iv. 209, 415. On Loan, ii. 231, 223, 264, 270, 271, 291, 292, 520, 539. iii. 148, 191. On his Majesty's Message relative to Dutch Prizes, ii. 236. Opens Budget, ii. 237, 268, 270, 271, 272, 277, 284. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate the Price of Labour, ii. 340. iii. 27. On Poor Relief Bill, ii. 343. On his Majesty's Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 274, 343, 355. On Distillery Bill, ii. 403, 404. On Drawbacks on Sugar, Tobacco Bill, &c. ii. 487, 488, 568. On Horse Tax, ii. 489, 554, 563. On Motion that Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet be burnt, ii. 513, 514. On Bread, ii. 549, 552. Moves Congratulatory Address to his Majesty on Safe Delivery of the Princess of Wales of a Daughter, iii. 3. Also to her Majesty and Prince and Princess. On Bill to prevent persons concerned in Loans from having seats in the House, iii. 21. Reply to Mr. Grey's question concerning preliminary Convention for General Peace, iii. 43. On Motion for Peace, iv. 50, 400, 445. On Slave Trade, iii. 50, 300. On State of the nation, iii. 216. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 122. iv. 206, 207. On vote of Credit Bill, iii. 122. Moves that Dr. Holmes preach before the House on the General Fast, iii. 153. On Maroon War in Jamaica, iii. 156. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 157, 247. On Relief and Employment of the Poor, iii. 253. On Scarcity of Corn, iii. 266. On Legacy Bill, iii. 273, 274, 275. On Wet Dock Bill, iii. 465, 470. On Game Laws, iii. 471, 472. iv. 274. On Collateral Succession Bill, iii. 506. iv. 4. On Dog Tax, iv. 8. 100, 204, 231, 232, 235, 236, 519. On printing articles of charge, &c. on Colonel Cawthorne's Court Martial, iv. 15. On Barracks, iv. 38, 46. Notice of moving substitute for tax on Calicoes, iv. 47. On Negroes, iv. 62. On Motion for papers relative to West India Expedition, iv. 82, 168, 182, 183, 263, 264. On M. Sombric's Letter, iv. 85, 110. On Budget, iv. 113, 133, 143, 145, 146, 153, 155. On Hat Tax, iv. 167, 237. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 168, 238, 367, 417, 424, 425, 572, 574. On Court of Conscience Bill, iv. 191. On Newspaper Conveyance Bill, iv. 219, 231. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 223. On Slave carrying Bill, iv. 227, 228, 417. On Longitude, iv. 268.
On Navy

GENERAL INDEX.

On Navy Bills, iv. 280. 351. 413. On Lottery, iv. 280. On Motion for expul-
sion of Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 346. On Sardinian Subsidy, iv. 351, 354-
521, 522. Curates maintenance Bill, iv. 360, 361. On Wine Duty, iv. 364,
366, 367. 466. 518. Moves Grant to Chelsea College, iv. 374. On Motion
for Impeachment of Ministers, iv. 384. On Austrian Loan, iv. 425. On
motion for change of System, iv. 495.

Christie's Divorce Bill, iv. 157.

Church, Mr. on conduct of Freeholders of Middlesex at Hackney, i. 463.

Conference on Outrage to the King, i. 7. 52. On high price of Corn, ii. 456,
457, 458.

Coke, Mr. Presents Petition from Yarmouth, i. 498. On Call of the House,
ii. 338. Moves for leave to bring in Bill to amend the Game Act, iii. 69 125.

Cocks, Mr. on Game Laws, iii. 405. iv. 278.

Cooper, Mr. motion in favour of, iv. 581.

Corn Committee appointed, i. 124.

Coxhead, Sir Thomas, on Bill to enable Justices to regulate price of labour,
iii. 37.

Courtney, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 223. On Army Estimates, i.
401. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 423. On Libel,
ii. 21. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 218. On Paisley Petition, ii. 398.
On Queensferry Petition, ii. 398. On Tobacco Bill, &c. ii. 488. On
Motion to have Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet burnt, ii. 514. On Loan, ii. 537. On
Slave Trade, iii. 86. On Dr. John Hunter's Museum, iii. 227. On anatomi-
zing Burglars, iii. 404. On Maroon War, iii. 488, 490. On Barracks,
iv. 41. On Pewter Pot Bill, iv. 161. On Dog Tax, iv. 201, 233. On
Motion for expulsion of Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 349.

Coventry, Earl of, on Finance, iv. 435.

Crespigny, Mr. Petition from Castle Baynard Ward, ii. 37. From Sudbury
against the Bills, ii. 155.

Curtis, Alderman, (Lord Mayor) on vote of Navy, i. 127. On Seditious
Meeting Bill, ii. 212. On the Loan ii. 538. On Corn, ii. 452. iv. 220.
On Petition of Merchants relative to Wet Docks, iii. 9. Presents Petition
against Wet Dock Bill from Fishmongers Company, iii. 344. 462. Moves
for postponement, iii. 351. Presents Petition from Brewers, iv. 78. On
Petition of Mr. Manning, iv. 164.

Curwen, Mr. on high price of Bread, i. 117, 820. On Seditious Meeting
Bill, i. 187, 225, 227, 283, 305. 452. On the two Bills, i. 499. On Poor
Relief Bill, ii. 214. On Budget, ii. 275. On Game Laws, iii. 69, 75, 125,
154, 318, 334, 335, 406, 408. 471, 472. iv. 269, 279, 328. On Dr. Hunter's
Museum, iii. 223, 228. On High Price of Corn, ii. 452. iii. 262. On
Legacy Bill, iii. 273. On State of the Nation, iii. 378. On General In-
closure Bill, iv. 187.

D.

Dalkeith, Earl of, Speech and motion for Address on King's Speech, i. 7. 94.

Darnley, Lord, on King's Speech, i. 76. In Committee on Treason Bill,
i. 213. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 449. 485. On High Price of Corn,
ii. 544.

Dent, Mr. moves for leave to bring in Bill for more expeditious convey-
ance of Writs, i. 266. On Loan ii. 290. On Petitions, ii. 398. On Horse
Tax, ii. 489. On Motion to have Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet burnt, ii. 511.
On Bill to regulate Conveyance of Writs, ii. 545. On Dog Tax, iii. 15,
253, 409, 515. iv. 6, 15, 101, 158, 166, 199. On Slave Trade, iii. 94, 300,
346, 347, 407, 408, 413, 515. On Maroon War, iii. 490. On Pewter Pot
Bill, iv. 86, 156. Brings up Report of Committee on Clerks Fees, iv. 166.

Derby, Earl of, on King's Speech, i. 69. On Lincoln Petition, ii. 294.
On Liverpool Petition, ii. 295, 296. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 304. On
Manchester Petition, ii. 44, 447. Presents Petition from Stockport, ii.
379. On Game Laws, iii. 337, 394.

Dent,

GENERAL INDEX.

Dobson, Sir William, on Call of the House, i. 461. On Libel (Thought* on Government) ii. 29, 513. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 45. On Slave carrying Bill, iii. 19. iv. 362, 425, 426, 577, 582, 583. Slave Trade, iii. 348. On Waste Lands, iii. 478. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 223, 362. On Veterinary College, iv. 348.

Douglas, Hon. Mr. on the Pamphlet called "Thoughts on the English Government," and motion to have it burnt, ii. 508. On the Loan, ii. 539 iii. 158. Moves for leave to bring in Bill to amend Mr. Grenville's Election Act, iii. 75.

Douglas, Lord, (Earl of Morton) on high Price of Corn, ii. 544. On Collateral Succession Bill, iv. 95, 96.

Duncombe, Mr. Henry, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 224, 231. On Halifax Petition, ii. 161. Presents Petition against the Bill from York, ii. 226. On Loan, ii. 538. On Culture of Potatoes, iii. 229. On General Inclosure Bill, iv. 187.

Dundas, Mr. Secretary, on message from the Lords on Outrage to the King, i. 53. Notice of motion for Thanks to Admiral Lord Bridport, i. 102. Moves Thanks, 102. Brings up State Papers, in Committee of Supply on Vote of Navy, 126. Moves Thanks to Vice Admiral Cornwallis, i. 166. On Call of the House, i. 200. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 221, 223, 237, 345. ii. 164, 204, 519. Petition from Merchants of Glasgow in favour of the Bills, ii. 45, 104. On Army Estimates, ii. 139, 145. Presents Petition from Halifax, ii. 161. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 215, 223. Presents Glasgow Petition in favour of Bills, ii. 229. On Thoughts on Government, ii. 234. On Generals in India, ii. 339. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate price of Labour, ii. 343. On his Majesty's Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 377. Petition from Magistrates of Paisley, ii. 397. Petition from Perth, and Leith, and Queensferry, ii. 398. On Edinburgh Petition, ii. 401. On Report from Corn Committee, ii. 450. On Motion to burn one of the Pamphlets called, "Thoughts on the English Government" by the hands of the common hangman, ii. 503, 504. Moves an Amendment, ii. 506. On Loan ii. 534, 537. On Slave Trade, iii. 98, 417. On Negroes, iv. 50, 73, 77. On Military Officers in India, iii. 114. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 124. On Maroon War in West Indies, iii. 483. On Motion for papers relative to West India Expedition, iv. 82, 178, 181, 239, 264, 265. On Budget, iv. 148. Moves for East India Papers, iv. 167. On Slave carrying Bill, iv. 226, 227, 428. On India Budget, iv. 576. On East India Company, iv. 585.

Dundas, Mr. Charles, on Bill for Relief of the Poor, i. 488. On Report of Corn Committee, ii. 452.

E.

Eardley, Lord, on Meeting of Opposition on the Treason and Seditious Bills being held on a Sunday, i. 269.

East Mr. on Budget, ii. 281. On high price of corn, ii. 452. On Negroes, iv. 72.

Edgumbe, Lord Mount, Speech and Motion for Address in House of Peers on King's Speech, i. 54.

Edinburgh, Petition from, presented by Mr. Secretary Dundas, i. 308.

Edwards, Mr. Noel, Rutland petition in favour of the Bills, ii. 227. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate price of labour, iii. 38.

Egerton, Mr. petition from Mayor and Corporation of Newcastle in favour of the Bills, ii. 47.

Erskine, Hon. Thomas, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 314, 367. On Breach of Privilege in publishing "Thoughts on Government," i. 425, 440. ii. 10. On Petition from Merchants and Bankers, i. 464. Presents Petition from 1500 persons at Portsmouth and Portsea, i. 484. On Treason Bill, ii. 49. Petition from Glasgow, ii. 103, 104. On Aldergate Petition ii. 163. On Queensferry Petition ii. 398. Presents Petition from Edinburgh, ii. 40, 402.

Evelyn,

GENERAL INDEX.

Evelyn, Sir George Shuckburgh, on Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 165. Presents Petition relative to John Hunter's Museum, iii. 222.

Evidence of Assault and Outrage committed on his Majesty, minutes of, Appendix, vol. i. 3.

F.

Farrer's Divorce Bill, second Reading in House of Lords, iii. 511.

Ferguson, Sir Adam, on real Succession Bill, iv. 422.

Fitzpatrick, General, on Army Estimates, i. 396. Motion for Copy of Letter of Service for raising the 100th or Aberdeenshire Regiment, i. 402. On Scotch Cavalry, ii. 2.

Fitzwilliam, Earl, on his Majesty's Message relative to negotiation, ii. 491. On Earl of Guildford's Motion for change of System, iv. 447.

Fox Mr. on King's Speech, i. 21. On Message from Lords, i. 52. On King's Speech, i. 51, 52. On Scarcity of Corn, i. 96, 376. On high price of Bread, i. 111, 119, 121. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 171, 291, 304, 350, 368, 428. On Call of the House, i. 200, 202. On Starch Bill, i. 371, 372, 379. On Treason Bill, i. 381, 453, 457, 528. On Suffolk Petition, i. 403. Presents Petition from Norwich against Bills, i. 407. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 420. On Breach of Privilege in publishing Thoughts on Government, i. 426, 435, 436, 437, 438, 445. ii. 27, 109. Call of the House, i. 462. On Petition from Merchants and Bankers, i. 467, 474. ii. 59. On Meeting at Epsom, i. 474. On Rochester Procession, i. 493. On Coventry Petition, i. 496. Presents Petition from Dartmouth, i. 497. On Libel, (Thoughts on Government) ii. 27, 233. Presents Petition from Lyme Regis, ii. 33, from Major Cartwright, and one from Westminster, ii. 34, 36. On Petition from Bailiff, Stewards &c. of Westminster, ii. 47. Petition from York and Plymouth, ii. 48. On Treason Bill, ii. 59, 70, 77. On Castle Baynard Ward Petition, ii. 99. On Petition from Glasgow, ii. 105. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 109, 111, 115, 171, 204, 212, 517, 518. Nottingham Petition, i. 127. On Army Estimates, ii. 145, 152. On Sudbury Petition, ii. 156. On Surry Petition, ii. 158. Petition from Suffolk, ii. 161. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 220, 224. On York Petition, ii. 217, 228. On Loan Petition, ii. 231, 264, 269, 272, 286, 291, 531, 534. iii. 202. On Budget, ii. 264, 269, 285, 286. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate price of Labour, ii. 340, 342. On his Majesty's Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 365. On Treason Bill, ii. 418, 433, 452, 453. On motion to have Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet burnt, ii. 511. Petition from Manchester, ii. 517. On Slave Trade, ii. 520. iii. 102, 430. Presents Petition from Publicans for regulations to prevent the stealing Pewter Pots, iii. 19. Brings up Report, iii. 154, 359. On Bill to prevent persons interested in Loans from sitting in the House, iii. 222. iv. 86. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate price of labour, iii. 38. On Motion for Peace, iii. 75. Westminster Police Bill, iii. 120. Presents Petition from Watermen against Wet Dock Bill, iii. 125. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 129. On Maroon War, iii. 156. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 238. On Game Laws, iii. 330, 335, 406, 372. On Bill for anatomizing Burglars, iii. 404. On Waste Land, iii. 479. On Legacy Bill, iv. 3. On Barracks, iv. 31. On Negroes, iv. 62, 77. On Mr. Sheridan's motion for Papers relative to West India Expedition, iv. 82. On M. Sombrieni's Letter, iv. 84, 85, 108, 111. On Budget iv. 134, 145. On Pewter Pot Bill, iv. 160, 161. On West India Expedition, iv. 181, 182, 184, 261, 264. On Sardinian Subsidy, iv. 353, 355. On real Succession Bill, iv. 368, 418. On Motion for Impeachment of Ministers, iv. 401. On Motion for change of System, iv. 467, 509.

Francis, Mr. on Petitions, i. 457. On Bill to regulate conveyance of Writs, ii. 345. On Mutiny Bill, ii. 486. On Report of Committee to consider Bill to permit Bakers to make mixed Bread, ii. 546. On Loan, iii. 171. On Dr. John Hunter's Museum, iii. 227. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 245, 246. On High Price of Corn, iii. 257, 271. On Game Laws, iii. 328, 407, iv. 276, 279. On Bill to anatomize felons, iii. 401. On Slave Trade iii. 414.

On

GENERAL INDEX.

On Millers Toll Regulation Bill, iii. 476. On Waste Lands, iii. 54. On Negroes in West Indies, iii. 479, iv. 48, 51, 76. On Collateral Succession Bill, iii. 505. On Articles and Sentence of Court Martial on Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 15. On Budget, iv. 154. On Pewter Pot Bill, iv. 159. On Motion for Papers relative to West India Expedition, iv. 182. On Newspaper Conveyance Bill, iv. 219. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 222, 466. On Slave-carrying Bill, iv. 226. On Motion for expulsion of Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 349. On Sardinian Subsidy, iv. 355. On Veterinary College, iv. 357. On Curates Relief Bill, iv. 360. On Wine Duty Bill, iv. 466. On Bill to enforce the bringing of Corn to Market, iv. 516. On real Succession Bill iv. 52.

Frederick, Sir John, Petition from Surry Clergy, ii. 36, 160.

G.

Grafton, Duke of, on King's Speech, i. 79, 89. On Vote of Credit, iii. 300, 305. On Earl of Guildford's motion for Change of System, iv. 446.

Grant Mr. Wm. on the Treason and Sedition Bills, i. 518.

Greenville, Lord, on Outrage on King, i. 4. On King's Speech, i. 63, 93. Notice of Treason Bill, 122. Introduces Bill, 127. Speech on it, 134, 138, 140, 158, 160. In committee on the Treason Bill, i. 203, 204, 205, 209, 213, 218, 249, 256. On Motion for papers, i. 239, 241. On Order, ii. 95. On Lord Albemarle's Motion relative to pamphlet, entitled "Thoughts on Government," ii. 121. On Lincoln Petition, ii. 292. Delver's Message of Foreign troops rendezvoused at Spithead, &c. &c. in 299. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 299, 449, 464, 474. On Bedford Petition and Mr. Burke, ii. 386. On Message relative to foreign troops, ii. 386. Motion respecting message relative to negotiation, ii. 388, 391. On the tendency of the two Bills, ii. 446. On resolution and agreement relative to consumption of wheat in private families, ii. 458, 460. On Loan Bill, ii. 359, 560. On Slave Trade, iii. 277. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 283, 292, 303, 305. On 4 and a half per cent. fund, iii. 319. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 342. On Lord Lauderdale's Motion for papers, iv. 12. On Collateral Succession Bill, iv. 94, 98, 163. On Conduct of Administration (Marquis of Lansdown's Motion) iv. 293. On Finance, iv. 431, 434, 436, 569, 571. On Earl of Guildford's motion for Change of System, iv. 448, 464. Motion in favour of Mr. Cowper, Clerk of the House, iv. 581.

Grey, Mr. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 197, 229, 237. On Call of the House, i. 201. On Motion of Adjournment, i. 221. On Army Estimates, i. 397. Presents Petition from Southampton against Treason and Seditious Meeting Bills, i. 229. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 419. On Breach of privilege (Thoughts on Government) i. 432, 449, ii. 233. Notice of Motion for Peace i. 453. On Treason Bill, i. 460. On Call of the House, i. 461, 462. On Petition of Bankers and Merchants, i. 480. Presents Petition from Newport and Launceston in Cornwall against the two Bills, ii. 1. Petition from Northumberland against the Bills, ii. 46. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 113, 115, 116, 211. On Army Estimates, ii. 142. Army Extraordinaries, ii. 215, 216, 226, iii. 70, iv. 205, 208, 209, 416. Presents Petition from Huddersfield against Bills, ii. 235. On Taxes, ii. 283. On Loan, ii. 290. On his Majesty's Message relative to Negotiation ii. 353. iii. 5. On Expence of Barracks iii. 6, iv. 45, 46, 150. Presents Petition of Sir Francis Blake, recommending a Tax on landed and funded Property, iii. 12. Question to Secretary at War relative to Army Extraordinaries, iii. 16. Question to Minister respecting preliminary conversation for General Peace founded on newspaper intelligence, iii. 43. Motion for Peace, iii. 44. On State of the Nation, iii. 75, 116, 335, 386, 391, 392. On Vote of Credit, iii. 114, 126. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 123. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 241, 245. On Game Laws iii. 333. On Waste Lands, iii. 478. On Collateral Succession Bill, iii. 500, iv. 4. On printing articles of charge and sentence on Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 15. Moves for Accounts, iv. 16. On Budget iv. 126, 147, 155. On Motion for Papers relative to West India Expedition, iv. 184, 255, 265. Notice of Motion on Finance, iv. 188. On Wine Duty, iv. 363, 364, 466. On real Estate Succession Bill

GENERAL INDEX.

Bill, iv. 369, 524. Impeachment of Ministers, iv. 375. On Austrian Loans iv. 425. On Slave-carrying Bill iv. 427.
Greville, Mr. Reports Answer to Address, i. 139.
Grosvenor Colonel, On Army Estimates, ii. 137, 139.
Guildford, Earl of, Notice of Motion on State of Nation, iv. 347. Motion iv. 439.

H.

Hammet, Sir Benjamin, on Petition of Merchants and Bankers, i. 466
 473, 484.
Halhead, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 179.
Hardwick, Earl of, on Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 339, 396.
Harrison, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 236, 331, 506. On Treason Bill, ii. 404. On Waste Lands, iii. 478. On Dog Tax, iv. 9. On Newspaper Conveyance Bill, iv. 219. On Game Laws, iv. 277. On Sardinian Subsidy, iv. 356. On Army Extraordinaries, iv. 417.
Hawkebury, Lord, on King's Speech, i. 87. On Treason Bill, i. 244. On Mr. Reeves's publication, ii. 124. On Liverpool Petition, ii. 296. On Agreement and resolution relative to reduced consumption of Wheat in families of individual members of both Houses, ii. 460. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 469. On High Price of Corn, ii. 542, 543. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 288. On Conduct of Administration, iv. 325. On Finance, iv. 434, 438, 563. On Earl of Guildford's Motion on Change of System, iv. 445.
Hay, Lord, (Earl of Kinnoul) on Game Laws, iii. 394. On Conduct of Administration, iv. 305.
Hardinge, Mr. on Breach of Privilege, i. 431, ii. 26. On Treason Bill, i. 458. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 165, 203.
Harley, Right Hon. Thomas, petition from Aldergate Ward, in favour of the Bills, ii. 162.
Hill, Sir Richard, on Slave Trade, iii. 94. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 352.
Hippesley, Mr. on Sudbury Petition, ii. 155, 157.
Hobart Mr. presents Petition from Dealers in Butter, iii. 18. Moves for leave to bring in a Bill for cloathing the Militia, iii. 153.
Honeywood, Mr. presents Petition from Rochester, i. 383, 491, 492. From Canterbury, i. 403. From Hithe, ii. 31. Exculpates Mayor of Rochester, ii. 32. Seconds Motion for second Reading of Bill to enable Justice to regulate price of labour, iii. 28. On High Price of Corn, iii. 271.
Hood, Lord, On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 367. Presents Petition from St. Clements Danes, ii. 1. Petition from High Bailiff, Stewards, &c. of Westminster, ii. 47. Presents Petition for leave to bring in a Bill for re-building Church of St. Paul, Covent Garden, iii. 18.
Hopetown, Earl of, on Treason Bill, i. 137, 244. Defends Edinburgh Petition, ii. 298. Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 396. On Edinburgh Petition against the Bills, ii. 445. Horse Duty Bill, ii. 554.
Hotbani, Admiral, Letter from, in Answer to Thanks, i. 103.
Huffey, Mr. on Scarcity of Corn, i. 95, 96, 262, 264, 373, 375, 379, ii. 486. On High Price of Bread, i. 117, 121, ii. 540. On Loan ii. 232, 271, 286. On Distillery Prohibition Bill, ii. 463. On Report of Corn Committee, ii. 453. On Tobacco Bill, ii. 487. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate Price of Labour, iii. 42. On Dr. John Hunter's Museum, iii. 227, 228. On Culture of Potatoes, iii. 229. On High Price of Corn, ii. 550, iii. 264. On Waste Lands, iii. 478, iv. 187. On Longitude, iv. 268. On Curates relief Bill, iv. 359, 360.

I.

Jekyll, Mr. On the War, i. 94. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 379. On Breach of Privilege in publishing Thoughts on Government, i. 424, ii. 49, 506.
 On

GENERAL INDEX.

On Petition of Directors of East India Company, ii. 46. On Loan ii. 272. On Budget ii. 282. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate Price of Labour, ii. 342. On Treason Bill, ii. 414. On Report of Committee on City Petition relative to recovery of Small Debts, iii. 24. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 157, 229, 250. On Court of Conscience Bill, iv. 190. On Indemnification of Clerks in Secretary of State's Office, iv. 230. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 370. On Sardinian Subsidy iv. 521.

Jenkinson, Mr. on Address on King's Speech, i. 16, 50. On Army Estimates, i. 398, ii. 133. On Treason Bill, ii. 423. On Motion to have "Thoughts on the English Government burnt," ii. 511. On Slave Trade, iii. 90. On Game Laws, iii. 334, iv. 277. On State of the Nation, iii. 372. On Slave carrying Bill, iv. 225.

Jervois, Mr. Petition from Hants against the Bills, ii. 47.

Joadrell, Mr. on Treason Bill, ii. 90. On Cultivation of Waste Lands, ii. 456. On Bread, ii. 553. On Legacy Bill, iii. 273. On Highway Robberies, iii. 399, 404. On Curates Maintenance Bill, iv. 238, 359, 360, 361.

Jolliffe, Mr. objects to Bill to enable Justices to regulate Price of Labour, ii. 340. On Bread, ii. 549. On Corn Committee, ii. 463. On Game Laws, iii. 125, 328, iv. 328. On Dog Tax, iv. 101, 232. On Veterinary College, iv. 351.

K.

King's Speech on Opening the Session, i. 1. On preroguing it, iv. 587.

Kenyon, Lord, on Debtor and Creditor Bill, iv. 217.

Knatchbull, Sir Edward, on Birmingham Petition, i. 491, 492, 493. On Rochester Petition, ii. 33.

L.

Lambton, Mr. on Motion of Adjournment, i. 222, 224, 226, 236. On Scarcity of Corn, i. 375. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, 418. On Breach of Privilege, i. 434. On the Treason and Sedition Bills, i. 514.

Lansdown, Marquis of, on outrage to the King, i. 6. On King's Speech, 63, 86, 88. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 313, 471. On Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 389, 392. On Resolution and agreement relative to reduced consumption of Wheat in private families, ii. 461. For Papers, iii. 508, iv. 149. On Conduct of Administration, iv. 280, 322, 324. On Finance, iv. 426, 565. On Earl of Guildford's Motion for Change of System, iv. 451, 462.

Lauderdale, Earl of, on King's Speech, i. 79, 85. On Treason Bill, i. 129, 138, 146, 158, 159, 162, 242, 243, 249, 251, 259. In Committee on the Bill, i. 204, 208, 210, 211, 214. Motion for Papers, i. 239, 240, 241. On Lord Auckland's Grant, ii. 91, 94, 95, 96. On "Thoughts on Government," ii. 120, 122. Objects to Petition from Lincoln Petition for informality, ii. 213, 293. Objects to Edinburgh Petition, ii. 297, 299. Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 331. On Message respecting foreign troops, ii. 387, 388. On Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 392, 396. Presents Petition from Edinburgh, ii. 435. On Manchester Petition, ii. 447. On Resolution and Agreement relative to reduced consumption of Wheat in private families, ii. 458. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 476, 484, 485. On Loan, ii. 540, 555, 561. On High Price of Corn, ii. 543, 544. Notice of Motion on 4 and a half per cent. fund, iii. 74. Postpones it, iii. 151. Moves for Accounts, iii. 152. On Slave Trade, iii. 275, 277. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 278, 286, 289, 292, 302, 303. Motion on 4 and a half per cent. fund, iii. 306, 315, 393. On Game Laws, iii. 637, 393, 395. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 338, 395, 398. Moves for Accounts, iv. 12, 13. On Personal Succession Bill, iv. 77, 88, 95, 96, 98, 149, 162, 163. On Conduct of Administration, iv. 298, 321, 324, 326. On Finance, iv. 439, 524. On Earl of Guildford's motion, iv. 458. On Legacy Bill, iv. 582.

Lechmere

GENERAL INDEX.

Leachmere, Mr. on high price of Bread, i. 109, iii. 25. On Army Estimates, i. 298. On Bill for relief of the Poor, i. 488. On Bread, ii. 494, 566. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate Price of Labour, iii. 35. On Scarcity of Corn, i. 374, iii. 70, 72, 254, 264, 409, 457, 491, iv. 99, 156, 229, 374. On Dog Tax, iv. 9, 519. On Cutting Butchers Petition, iv. 81. On Pewter Pot Bill, iv. 87, 161. On Millers Bill, iv. 100. On General Inclosure Bill, iv. 188. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 223.

Leeds, Duke of, on Treason Bill, i. 164. In Committee on the Bill, i. 203, 205, 208, 213, 217. On Order, ii. 96, 121. On Alarm occasion by the Bills, ii. 386. On Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 394. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 469.

Lewes, Sir Watkin, on Petition of Bankers and Merchants, i. 479. On Bread, ii. 549. On Petition of Merchants relative to Wet Docks, iii. 11, 471. On City Militia Act, moves for new Bill, iii. 295, 354. Moves to bring in Bill to License Summer Theatre, near Well-close-square, iv. 230.

London, Petition from the City respecting Treason and Seditious Meeting Bills, i. 381.

Lincoln, Petition, presented and withdrawn, ii. 213.

Loan discussed, ii. 229. Petition respecting it, ii. 229, 520.

Lottery, ii. 291.

Lushington, Alderman, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 186, 228. On Petition of Merchants and Bankers, i. 465. On Taxes, ii. 285. On Army Estimates, i. 396. On Loan, ii. 290. On Petition of Merchants relative to Wet Docks, iii. 11. Presents Report of Committee on City Petition for regulating the mode of recovering Small Debts, ii. 24, 25. On Ditto, iv. 192, 191. Moves for leave to bring in Bill to amend 13th and 14th George 3d. for regulating tols on Turnpikes, iii. 294, 350, iv. 363. On Slave Trade, iii. 297. Presents two Petitions against Wet Dock Bill, iii. 343, 469, 470, 471. On Hay and Straw Bill, iv. 268.

M.

Macleod, General, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 224. On the Army, i. 307, 394, 397, 398, 399. On Returns of Land Forces, i. 387, 388, 389. On Breach of Privilege, i. 423. On Petitions against the Bill, i. 495. On Scotch Cavalry, ii. 2. On Irish Brigade, ii. 48. On Treason Bill, ii. 89. On Army Estimates, ii. 102, 131, 134. On Paisley Petition, ii. 397. On Edinburgh Petition, ii. 400. On Scarcity of Corn, iii. 72. On Maroons of Jamaica, iii. 152, 409, 480, 490. On Dog Tax, iv. 235. On Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 344, 348. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 425. On Barracks, iv. 575.

Mainwaring, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 368, ii. 114. On Conduct of Freeholders of Middlesex, at Hackney, i. 463. Presents Petition from Publicans, i. 485. From Clerkenwell, ii. 154. Presents Petition from Dealers in Hay and Straw, iii. 18. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 124. Presents Petition of Proprietors of certain Waterworks at Shadwell against Wet Dock Bill, iii. 149. Presents Petition from Cutting Butchers, iv. 180. Brings Report of Committee on Bill to prevent Frauds in Hay and Straw, iv. 189. On Summer Theatre, iv. 230.

Maitland, General, on Army Estimates, i. 398.

Major, Mr. Henniker, on Budget, ii. 280, 290. Moves for leave to bring in a Bill to give power to Courts of Justice to grant Costs in Cases of Misdemeanours, iii. 150, 151. On Game Laws, iii. 328. On Misdemeanour Costs Bill, iv. 78.

Mansfield, Earl of, (President of the Council) On King's Speech, i. 75. Presents Copies of Treaties with Russia and Germany, i. 122. On Treason Bill, i. 151, 242, 244. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 333, 448. On High Price of Corn, ii. 540, 542, 545. Moves to congratulate Prince and Princess of Wales, on birth of a Daughter, iii. 1. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 269. On Earl of Guildford's Motion for Change of System, iv. 447.

Manning, Mr. Presents Petition from Merchants of London, relative to erecting

GENERAL INDEX.

erecting and establishing Wet Docks, iii. 9, 11. Obtains leave to bring in Bill iii. 69, 74. On Bill, iii. 351, 457, 460. On Negroes, iv. 76.

Martin, Mr. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 195. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 419. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 225. On printing Money Bills, ii. 489. On Motion to have Mr. Reeves's "Thoughts on the English Government," burnt, ii. 509. On Corn, ii. 454. On Bread, ii. 549. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate Price of Labour, iii. 41, 42. On Hamburg Bills, iii. 52. On High Price of Corn, iii. 272. On Legacy Bill, iii. 274. On the State of the Nation, iii. 392. On French Emigrants, iv. 186. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 223. On Dog Tax, iv. On Curates relief Bill, iv. 359. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 424. On Motion for Bill to enforce bringing of Corn to market, iv. 518.

Master of the Rolls (Sir R. P. Arden,) on Breach of Privilege (Thoughts on Government) i. 438, 439, 445, ii. 29, 233, 234. On Treason Bill, ii. 84, 153. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 500.

Mesurier, Mr. Alderman Le, on Merchants and Bankers Petition, i. 482. On Aldersgate Petition, ii. 162, 163. On Petition of Merchants relative to Wet Docks, iii. 11, 463. On City Militia Act, iii. 295.

Milbank, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 325. Presents Durham Petition against the Bill, ii. 396. On Slave Trade, iii. 347.

Message to Commons on Outrage on the King, i. 7. With evidence of Outrage, i. 96. His Majesty's, relative to sale of Dutch Prizes, ii. 226 delivered to Lords, ii. 273. Relative to Crisis having arrived to induce his Majesty to meet any disposition for negotiation on the part of the enemy, ii. 274. Relative to landing Foreign Troops at Southampton, and in the Isle of Wight, 274. Of the French Executive Directory, Appendix, Vol. iv. 1.

Milner, Sir William, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 234, 301. On Meeting of Freeholders at Hackney, i. 463. Reads Letter from Sheriff of York, ii. 40.

Minority, address on King's Speech, i. 53. On Treason Bill, i. 163. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 266, ii. 336, 485. On Mr. Curwen's Motion, i. 540. On Mr. Grey's Motion for Peace, iii. 68. On Mr. Grey's Motion on State of the Nation, iii. 392. On Clause in Game Act, proposed by Earl of Lauderdale, iii. 394. On Motion for change of System, iv. 514. On Motion for Bill to enforce bringing of Corn to market, iv. 518.

Mordaunt, Earl of, on Lincoln Petition, ii. 294. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 320. On Debtor and Creditor Bill, iii. 509, iv. 210, 212, 218. On State of the Nation, (Marquis of Lansdown's motion) iv. 311, 429. On Finance, iv. 432, 435, 560.

Mordaunt, Sir John, on Birmingham Petition, i. 492, 11, 164.

Morgan, Sir Charles, on Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 349.

Mornington, Lord, sent to Lords as Manager of Conference, i. 53. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 332.

Mountague, Mr. M. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 200, ii. 172. On Army Estimates, i. 393. On Slave Trade, iii. 345, 416. On State of the Nation, iii. 380. On Calderon Canal Bill, iii. 512. On real Succession Bill, iv. 412.

Mutiny Bill, ii. 456.

Mulgrave, Lord, on Mr. Reeves's pamphlet, ii. 125. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 319, 349, 449, 479. On Message relative to Negotiation ii. 393, 395. On Agreement and resolution relative to reduced consumption of Wheat in private families, ii. 459. On Game Laws, iii. 338. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 342, 395. On postponement of Debate on Earl Guildford's Motion, iv. 444. On the Motion, iv. 451.

Mutiny Bill, Conversation on second reading, ii. 486.

N

Navy, voted, 126.

Newnham, Mr. Alderman, on Treason Bill, i. 458. On Petition from Merchants and Bankers, i. 465. On Treason Bill, ii. 405. On High Price of

GENERAL INDEX.

of Corn, ii. 452. On Legacy Bill, iii. 273, 492, iv. 2. On Budget, iv. 146. On Veterinary College, iv. 357. On real Succession Bill, iv. 372, 417.
Newport (Isle of Wight) Petition from presented, i. 369.
Norfolk, Duke of, on King's Speech, i. 92. On Treason Bill, i. 162. Presents Petition from Nottingham against the Bills, ii. 297. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 311, 349, 449. On Slave Trade, iii. 278. On Game Laws, iii. 338. On Quaker's relief Bill, iv. 579.
Note of the Court of London, upon Mr. Parthelemy's answer to Mr. Wickham's notification that Great-Britain was ready to treat for Peace, iv. 5.

O

Onslow, Lord, on outrage on the King, i. 5.
Onslow, Mr. on Meeting at Epsem, i. 474. On Surry Petition, ii. 157.
Ord, Mr. in favour of the two Bills, ii. 212, 213.
Osborn, Earl of, on Bedford Petition, ii. 384, 385, 386.
Outrage on the King, i. 4.

P

Parker, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 212.
Pelham, Mr. presents Petition from Lewes in Sussex, ii. 157.
Peace, Motion for, i. 453.
Penton, Mr. on Dog Tax, iv. 198.
Petition from Colchester presented, i. 215. From London Corresponding Society, i. 415. From Leicester, &c. ii. 1. From Major Cartwright, ii. 34. From Kilmarnock, in favour of Bills, ii. 275. Relative to Wet Docks in the City of London, iii. 12. Of Sir Francis Blake, recommending Tax on the funded and landed Property, iii. 13.
Pepham, Mr. on Miller's Toll Regulation Bill, iii. 476, iv. 47.
Plumer, Mr. on Wet Dock Bill, iii. 74. Miller's Toll Regulation Bill, iii. 476.
Portland, Duke of, presents Petition from Bath, i. 140, from Leeds, ii. 99, from Edinburgh, ii. 297.
Powys, Mr. on Seditious Meetings, i. 277, ii. 115, 185. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 421. Motion on Grand Junction Canal, ii. 235. On culture of Potatoes, iii. 229. On High Price of Corn, iii. 260. On Game Laws, iii. 329. On Waste Lands, iii. 473, 476, iv. 183. On Westminster Police Bill, iv. 206.
Proceedings of House respecting High Price of Corn. Appendix, vol. ii. 80.
Proclamation of Dissolution of Parliament, iv. 589.
Protest against Treason Bill, i. 264. Against Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 336. Against Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 335. Against Collateral Succession Bill, iv. 582.
Pulteney, Sir William, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 178. On Treason Bill, ii. 407. On Bread, ii. 565, 566. On Sugar Bill, ii. 567. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 238. On State of the Nation, iii. 372. On Caldon Canal Bill, iii. 512. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 370, 420.

R

Radnor, Lord On Treason Bill, i. 136. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 449. On Game Laws, iii. 395, 399.
Rapheigh, Mr. On Collateral Succession Bill, iii. 274, 494. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 367.
Report from Committee on making flour from wheat, printed June 14, 1794, reprinted November 9, 1795, Appendix, i. 47. From Committee made 21st December, 1772. Appendix, i. 111. First of Corn Committee, Appendix, ii. 58. Second 62. Third 65. Second of Committee appointed to enquire respecting author of pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on English Government, Appendix,

GENERAL INDEX.

pendix, ii. 78. Further Report on Ditto, 96. From Committee on the Loan, Appendix, ii. 107 to 236.

Rider, Hen. Dudley, on scarcity of Corn, i. 96. On the subject of Corn, i. 139, 261, 267, 380, ii. 486, iii. 72. On Bill respecting circulation of Grain, i. 489, 490, iii. 510. On Budget, 563, ii. 282. Presents Report from Corn Committee, ii. 449. Motion upon it, ii. 452, 454. On Bread, ii. 489, 547, 563, 565. Moves for leave to bring in a Bill, Governors, &c. of certain parts, for permitting importation and exportation of Goods in foreign Bottoms, iii. 8. On Game Laws, iii. 333. On High Price of Corn, ii. 351. On Wet Dock Bill, iii. 470, 474. Report of Committee, iii. 474, 513. On Caldon Canal Bill, iii. 512. Slave carrying Bill, iv. 225.

Rescript, Copy of the Emperor's sent to Baron De Hagel, in answer to Letter of Diet of Ratibon on late victories of Austrian arms, Appendix, iv. 6.

Robinson, Morris, on Address, i. 18. In Committee of Supply on Vote of Seamen, i. 125, 126. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 185, 227, 236, ii. 33, 115. On Call of the House, i. 202. On Motion of Adjournment, i. 221. On Army Estimates, i. 396. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 421. On Breach of Privilege, i. 428. On Petition from Hithe, ii. 33. On his Majesty's Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 352. On Treason Bill, ii. 410. On Motion to have Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet burnt, ii. 515. Notice of motion for Bill to incapacitate Persons having share in Loans to sit in Parliament, iii. 5, 19, 22. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 120. On Hamburg Bills, iii. 249. On State of the Nation, iii. 386. On Maroon War, iii. 487. On Negroes, iv. 75. On real Succession Bill, iv. 418. On Misconduct of Ministers, iv. 509.

Rocheater, Bishop of, on King's Speech, i. 89. In Committee on Treason Bill, i. 209, 214, 215. On the Bill, i. 257, 260. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 448. On High Price of Corn, ii. 544. On Slave Trade, iii. 277. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 343, 398. On Collateral Succession Bill, iv. 96, 97, 163. On Longitude Bill, iv. 525. On Quaker's Relief Bill, iv. 580.

Rocheater, Petition from, against the Treason and Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 383.

Romney, Lord, proposes Thanks to Admiral Cornwallis, i. 123. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 449.

Rolle, Mr. on Army Estimates, i. 398. On Treason Bill, i. 460. On Petitions, i. 497, 498. On Budget, ii. 280. On Horse Tax, ii. 563.

Rose, Mr. brings in Bills, i. 216. On Scarcity of Provisions, i. 263, 264. On Starch Bill, i. 371. On Corn, i. 389, iii. 261. On Distillery prohibition Bill, ii. 1, 101, 102, 104. On Taxes, ii. 292. On Horse Duty, ii. 503. On Vote of Credit, iii. 115. On Slave Trade, iii. 440. Brings in Miller's Bill, iii. 473. On Molasses, iii. 474. Moves Instruction to Committee relative to Wine Duty, iv. 185, 190, 365. On Slave carrying Bill, iv. 226.

Rose, Junior, Mr. Petition from Portsea and Portsmouth, ii. 37. On Plymouth Petition, ii. 48.

Rous Sir John, on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 369. On Suffolk Petition, i. 422, ii. 161. On Bill for relief of the Poor, i. 487. On Game Laws, iv. 278.

Russel, Lord William, moves suddenly to adjourn, i. 220, 221, 226, 236. Presents Petition from 6000 Freeholders of Surry, ii. 157, (relative to Bread) iii. 8. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 118. Curate's Maintenance Bill, iv. 361.

Russel, Lord John, On Army Estimates, i. 400. Presents a Petition from Winchester, i. 498. On Borough of Southwark Petition, ii. 108.

S

Salt, Bill to allow Discount on prompt Payment of Duties on, and Debate thereupon, ii. 485.

Salisbury, Sir Robt t, enquires relative to intended Dog Tax, iii. 15. On Game Laws, iii. 335, iv. 278.

Sander

GENERAL INDEX.

- Sanderfon, Alderman Sir James*, On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 283, ii. 212.
- Scarborough, Earl of*, on Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 449. On High Price of Corn, ii. 544.
- Scott, Mr. David*, presents Petition of Directors of East-India Company in favour of the two Bills, ii. 46. To enable Directors to pull down Houses in Leadenhall-street, and erect additions to India-House, iii. 17.
- Scott, Sir William*, Petition from Castle-Baynard Ward in favour of the two Bills, ii. 99, 101. On his Majesty's Message relative to Sale of Dutch Prizes, ii. 236. Curate's Maintenance Bill, iv. 358, 361. On Bill for relief of Quakers, iv. 576.
- Secretary at War*, (Mr. Windham) on King's Speech, i. 51, 52, 53. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 196, 304. On Returns of Land Forces, i. 387. On Army Estimates, i. 389, 393, 395, 397, 399, ii. 130, 137. On Breach of Privilege, i. 428, 429, 434, 436, 437, ii. 13, 18. On Treason Bill, i. 457. On Irish Brigade, ii. 48. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 217, 223, iii. 17, 70, iv. 209, 414, 415. On Motion to have Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet burnt, ii. 514. On Mutiny Bill, ii. 486, 554. Brings up Account of Barracks expenditure, iii. 6, 349. On the same, iii. 7, iv. 19, 31, 575, 576. Moved for a new Bill relative to exoneration of Innkeepers for quartering Soldiers, iii. 24. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 118. On Game Laws, iii. 329. On Slave Trade, iii. 443. On Negroes, iv. 71. On M. Sombrieu's Letter, iv. 83, 86, 85, 105, 112. On Pewter Pot Bill, iv. 160. On Dog Tax, iv. 196. On Sardinian Subsidy, iv. 356. On Veterinary College, iv. 358. On Motion for Impeachment of Ministers, iv. 414. On real Succession Bill, iv. 417, 423. On Slave carrying Bill, iv. 426, 428.
- Seditious Meeting Bill* introduced into Commons, i. Copy of it, ii. 434. Carried to House of Lords, ii. 213.
- Serjent, Mr.* on Maintenance of the Poor, i. 229. On Army Estimates, ii. 138. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 218.
- Sheridan, Mr.* on King's Speech, i. 11, 50. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 192, 226, 238, 305, 339, ii. 41, 43, 44, 112, 114, 165, 176. On Call of the House, i. 200, 202, 461. On Treason Bill, i. 268, 269, 305, 270, 459, ii. 410. On Bristol Petition, i. 407, 428. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 417. On Breach of Privilege in publishing Pamphlet called Thoughts on Government, i. 428, 438, 448. On the two Bills, ii. 474. On Publicans Petition, i. 485. Presents Petition against the Bills from Faringdon Without, i. 486. On Bill respecting Circulation of Grain, i. 489, 490. On Petitions against the Bills, i. 490, 495, 498. On Birmingham Petition, i. 493, ii. 165. On Libel, ii. 2, 26, 29, 30, 49, 108, 212, 233, 234. On Report, ii. 495, 506, 514, 516. Presents Petition from Stafford, Newcastle-under-Lyne, from Mechanics, ii. 34. On Westminster Petition, ii. 36. On Aldersgate Ward Petition, ii. 38. Petition from Clerkenwell, ii. 40. Petition from Spitalfields Weavers, ii. 101. On the Bills, ii. 106. Petition from Bookfellers, Stationers, and Printers, against the Bills, ii. 105. On Clerkenwell Petition, ii. 154. On Aldersgate Petition, ii. 162. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 219, 225, 226, iv. 209, 414, 576. On Budget, ii. 276. On Loan, ii. 270, 271, 334, 538, 539. On Call of the House, ii. 339. On his Majesty's Message, ii. 344. Moves Amendment to Motion on it, 348, 383. On supposed Petition from Lancaster, ii. 392. Presents Petition from Villages near Dumbarton, ii. 400. On Treason Bill, ii. 410. On Report from Corn Committee, ii. 452. On Tobacco Bill, ii. 483. On Horse Tax, ii. 488, 489. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 130. Notice of Enquiry into the Conduct of the Expedition to the West-Indies, iii. 131. On Wet Dock Bill, iii. 464. On Maroon War, iii. 587. Moves for Papers relative to the West-India Expedition, iv. 81, 169, 181, 183, 254, 262, 263, 265, 266. On M. Sombrieu's Letter, iv. 85, 102. On Budget, iv. 147. On Mr. Manning's Petition relative to Stamp on Bill of Exchange, iv. 164, 165. On Hat Tax, iv. 166, 167, 237. On Wine Duty Bill, iv. 186, 190, 365, 366, 367. On Dog Tax, iv. 187, 192, 236. On Westminster Police Bill, iv. 206, 207. On real Estate

Sec.

GENERAL INDEX.

Succession Bill, iv. 238, 572. On Curates Maintenance Bill, iv. 239. On Game Laws, iv. 276. On Alien Bill, iv. 357. On Veterinary College, iv. 358. *Steffield, Lord*, on Distillery prohibition Bill, ii. 403. On Bristol Petition, i. 406, 407. On Bread, ii. 489. On Amendment to Motion relative to burning Pamphlet, called, "Thoughts on the English Government," by the hands of the common hangman, ii. 506. On Bread, ii. 551, 553. On Horse Tax, ii. 564. On Melasses, iii. 473. On Waste Lands, iii. 477, iv. 188. On Slave carrying Bill, iv. 227. On Dog Tax, iv. 234, 519. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 372.

Sinclair, Sir John, on high Price of Bread, i. 117. On Libel (Thoughts on Government) ii. 25. Petition from Distillers at Greenock and Glasgow, respecting Molasses, ii. 102. On Board of Agriculture, ii. 102, 103. Motion relative to Cultivation of Waste Lands, ii. 454, iii. 3. Presents a Petition, praying for further grants to Board of Agriculture, iii. 18. Moves for Instruction to Committee to provide remuneration for losses that would be sustained by Officers of the House, in case a Bill for the general Inclosure of Waste Lands passed, iii. 154, 477, 510, iv. 187, 188, 363. On culture of Potatoes, iii. 228, 229. On Collateral Succession Bill, iii. 595.

Slave Trade, ii. 520.

Smith, General, on Scarcity of Corn, i. 96, 374. ii. 486. iii. 17. On high price of Bread, i. 118, 119. On Starch Bill, i. 372. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 229. On return of Land Forces, i. 383. On Army Estimates, i. 393, 394, 96, 399, 401. On Breach of Privilege, i. 430. On Conduct of ministerial side of the House, ii. 33. On Army Estimates, ii. 128, 137, 153. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 163, 164. Army Extraordinaries, ii. 214. On Budget, ii. 280, 292. On Call of the House, ii. 339. On Generals in India, ii. 337. On his Majesty's Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 363. On Tobacco Bill, ii. 487. On Barrack Expenditure, iii. 6, 7, 16, 457. iv. 16. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate price of labour, iii. 42. Military officers in India, iii. 113. On Vote of credit, iii. 115. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 119. On Apothecaries Petition, iii. 149, 318. iii. 344. On Slave Trade, iii. 296, 300, 344, 413. On Bill for anatomizing Burglars, iii. 404. On Wet Dock Bill, iii. 470, 472. On Legacy Bill, i. 3. Moves for Copy of article of charge and sentence of Court Martial on Colonel Cawthorne being printed, iv. 15. On Cutting Butchers Petition, iv. 80. On Dog Tax, iv. 101. On *M. de Sombriuel*, iv. 107. On Budget, iv. 148. On Pewter Pot, iv. 160. On clause in Wine Duty Bill relative to Auctioners, iv. 185, 365. Moves that Proceedings of the Court Martial on Colonel Cawthorne be taken into consideration on Friday, April 29, iv. 192, 329, 340, 340. On Curates Maintenance Bill, iv. 239, 359, 361. On West Indies, iv. 265. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 372, 420, 424. On Slave carrying Bill, iv. 426. On India affairs, iv. 577, 583.

Smith, William, Mr. on Treason Bill, i. 382. ii. 228. On Merchant and Bankers Petition, i. 483. On other Petitions, i. 494. On Libel (Thoughts on Government) ii. 31. Petition from Ward of Alderigate, ii. 37. From Wrexham, ii. 48. On Distillery Prohibition Bill, ii. 102. On Army Estimates, ii. 152. On Alderigate Petition, ii. 187. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 225. Presents *Mr. Morgan's* Petition respecting Loan, 229. On ditto, 231, 270, 289, 520, 521, 533, 534, 539. On Budget, ii. 255. On Taxes, ii. 284. On Motion that *Mr. Reeves's* "Thoughts on the English Government" be burnt by the common hangman, ii. 510. Brings up Report of Committee on Loan, iii. 16. On ditto, iii. 132. Resolutions moved, iii. 143, 148, 158, 215. Resolutions as they passed, iii. 216. On Slave Trade, iii. 95, 346, 408. On State of the Nation, iii. 116. On *Hamburgh Bills*, iii. 248. High Price of Corn, iii. 263, 265. On Barrels, iv. 40. On Negroes, iv. 75, moves for copies of the several acts passed by different colonial assemblies relative to regulation &c. of Slaves, iv. 77. On Report of Budget, iv. 151. On Hat Tax, iv. 237. On West India Expedition, iv. 267.

GENERAL INDEX.

Solicitor General, (Sir John Mifsford) on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 30, 811, 117, 114. On Breach of Privilege, i. 434. ii. 813. On Treason Bill, ii. 90. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 218. On Succession Bill, iii. 272, 498. On Game Laws, iv. 328. On Motion for expulsion of Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 350. On Alien Bill, iv. 357. On real Estate Succession Bill, iv. 371, 418.

Smith, Mr. R. on Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 578.

Speaker, the, reports Vice Admiral Hotham's Letter on receiving thanks of the House, i. 103. Thanks to Lord Bridport, i. 104. On Order, ii. 77. On Privilege, ii. 518. Recommends special entry on the Journals of reasons for agreeing to Lords Amendment in Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 519. Acquaints the House that he has received a letter from Vice Admiral Cornwallis which is read, iii. 1. Also from Rear Admiral Harvey, (Letter read) iii. 2. On Order on Wet Dock Bill, ii. 468, 469. States that person appointed had completed an Index to the eleven last volumes of Journals, iv. 189. On Curates Relief Bill, iv. 348, 360, 364. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 578.

Speed, Mr. can't attend Call of the House because arrested in Isle of Man. Complaint of it as Breach of Privilege, ii. 516.

Spencer, Earl, on King's Speech, i. 82, 86, 94. Moves Thanks to Lord Bridport, i. 122. To Vice Admiral Cornwallis, i. 123. On Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet, ii. 125. On the Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 321. On Bedford Petition, ii. 386. On Message relative to foreign troops landed, ii. 387. On conduct of Administration, iv. 319, 321. On Earl of Guildford's Motion for change of System, iv. 463.

Stanley, Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 177, 225, 235. ii. 45, 117. On Petition from Manchester respecting Treason and Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 402. On the Libel (Thoughts on Government) i. 430. ii. 28. On Treason Bill, ii. 90. Presents petition from Lancaster relative to Distillery, ii. 403. Counter Petition from Manchester, ii. 517. On Bread, ii. 566.

Steel, Mr. on Army Extraordinaries, ii. 213. On the Loan, iii. 187. On Hamburgh Bills, iii. 245. On State of the Nation, iii. 381, 392. On Barracks, iv. 45, 46, 147, 150. On Army Extraordinaries, iv. 209. On Motion for Impeachment of Ministers; iv. 411.

Stewart Mr. seconds Address on King's Speech, i. 9.

Stephens, Sir Philip, on Longitude, iv. 156, 328, 415.

Stopford Lord Viscount, delivers King's Answer to Address, i. 101.

Sturt, Mr. presents Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 409, 419. On Breach of Privilege on the author of Thoughts on Government, i. 423.

Suffolk Petition, presented, i. 402.

Suffolk, Earl of, on Vote of Credit, iii. 301.

Sumner Mr. on Culture of Potatoes, iii. 229. On Veterinary College iv. 357.

Sutton, Sir Richard, on Calden Canal Bill, iii. 512. On Game Laws, iv. 328. On Dog Tax, iv. 219.

Sydney, Lord Viscount, on Mr. Burke, ii. 94, 96. On Lincoln Petition, ii. 294. On Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 391. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 396. On Collateral Succession Bill, iv. 88. On Change of System, (Earl of Guildford's Motion, iv. 443.

T.

Tax on Legacies, copy of the Bill, Appendix, vol. iii. 3 to 30.

Taxes, ii. 456.

Tarleton General, on Address on King's Speech, i. 18. On Army Estimates, i. 220, 392, 396, 339; ii. 134, 139, 141. On Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 232, 299. On Order, i. 299. On Returns of Land Forces, i. 388. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 421. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 216, 217, 224. iv. 415. On Treason Bill, ii. 407. On Tobacco Tax, ii. 488, 516. On Barracks, iii. 7. On Slave Trade, iii. 82, 297, 345, 409. On High Price of Corn, iii. 263, 271. Moves for copy of M. Sombrioul's Letter,

GENERAL INDEX.

iv. 83, 85. Slave Carrying Bill, iv. 224, 577. On West Indies, iv. 263. On Motion for Expulsion of Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 349. On Sardinian Subsidy, iv. 351. On Veterinary College, iv. 357.

Taylor, Mr. M. A. on Breach of Privilege, i. 437. Petition from Poole, ii. 101. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 216. On Barracks, iv. 26.

Thanks to Lord Bridport, Sir Alan Gardner, Lord Seymour, Officers, Seamen, &c. i. 122, 102.

Thomas Mr. Petition from Chichester, ii. 101.

Thornton, Mr Henry, on Scarcity, i. 264. Presents Petition from Colchester against the Bills, i. 498. From Southwark, ii. 107. On Apothecaries Petition, iii. 344.

Thornton, Mr S. on Wet Dock Bill, iii. 464.

Thornton, Mr. R. on Budget, ii. 282.

Thurlow, Lord, on Treason Bill, i. 43, 160. In Committee on the Bill, i. 206. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 322, 480, 483. On Ditto in Committee, ii. 447, 448. On Agreement and Resolution on reduced consumption of wheat in private families, ii. 459, 460. On Vote of Credit Bill, iii. 401, 302. On Game Laws, iii. 337, 338. On Shadwells Divorce Bill, iii. 339, 342, 396, 397. Opposes Motion on Report of Committee on Lord Temple's Marriage Bills, iii. 354. Debtor and Creditor Bill, iv. 216.

Townsend Marquis, on King's Speech, i. 79, 89. On Treason Bill, i. 163, 165. On Game Laws iii. 337.

Treason Bill, vol. i. 127, 140, 453. Copy of it, i. 261, ii. 434.

Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation with America, Appendix, vol. i. 15. Of Defensive Alliance with Russia, Appendix vol. i. 33. Of Defensive Alliance with Emperor of Germany, Appendix vol. i. 41.

Turner, Sir Gregory Page, on Budget, ii. 279. On Motion to have Mr. Reeves Pamphlet burnt, ii. 515. On State of the Nation, iii. 381, 386. On Dog Tax, iv. 10.

Tyrcconnel Lord, on Mr. Cawthorne's Court Martial, iv. 15. Moves to postpone consideration of the proceedings to Monday 2d of May, iv. 192.

V.

Vanfittart Mr. On Petitions, i. 497. On Bill to enable Justices to regulate Price of Labour, iii. 37, 43. Bill for anatomizing Burglars, iii. 404.

Votes of Parliament, leave given to bring in a Bill for more easy conveyance of, ii. 214.

Vyner, Mr. presents Petition from Thirsk against the two Bills, ii. 235.

Young, Sir William, on relief of the Poor, 417. 488.

Torke, Mr. on the Maroon War in Jamaica, iii. 156. On Order, iii. 246.

W.

Wallace, Mr. on the Bills, i. 506. On Game Laws, iii. 405.

Walsingham, Lord, seconds Address on King's Speech, i. 56. Brings up the Report on Bill to enable Lord Temple to marry Lady Eliza Brydges, iii. 353. On Shadwell's Divorce Bill, iii. 397.

Western, Mr. on Treason Bill, ii. 408.

Westmoreland Earl of, on outrage to the King, i. 4. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 310.

Wickham, Mr. his notification to Mr. Barthelemy at Basse respecting negotiation, Appendix vol. iv. 4.

Wigley, Mr. On Bread, ii. 66. Presents Petition from Apothecaries against unqualified Persons selling Medicines, &c. iii. 149. On Bill to enable Courts of Justice to grant costs, iii. 150. Defence of Colonel Cawthorne, iv. 343.

Wilberforce Mr. on Seditious Meeting Bill, i. 183, 232. ii. 44. On Corn, i. 380, iii. 262. On Outrage to his Majesty, i. 416. On Breach of Privilege (Thoughts on Government) i. 451. ii. 23. 515. On Treason Bill, i. 460. Presents Petition from Leeds, i. 498. On Sheriff of York, ii. 39. Presents Counter

GENERAL INDEX.

Counter Petition from York in favour of Bills, ii. 226. On his Majesty's Message relative to Negotiation, ii. 349. On Report of Corn Committee, ii. 453. On Slave Trade, ii. 520, iii. 7, 19, 77, 105, 125, 296, 297, 344, 349, 407, 408, 515. iv. 224, 523, 577, 583, 584. On Horse Duty, ii. 555, 565. On Westminster Police Bill, iii. 119. On Game Laws, iii. 334. On Apothecaries Petition, iii. 344. On Dog Tax, iv. 9. On Quakers Relief Bill, iv. 222. Curates Maintenance Bill, iv. 361.

Windham, Mr. (vide Secretary at War)

Wilmot, Mr. on Petitions against the Bills, i. 496.

Wilton, Lord Grey de, Presents Manchester Petition, ii. 445, 446.

Witnesses, examined on outrage on the King, i. 6.

Whitbread, Mr. on Labourers in Husbandry, vol. i. 370. On Petition from London Corresponding Society, i. 418. On Relief of the Poor, 487, 488. On the two Bills, i. 508. On Army Extraordinaries, ii. 218, 225. Brings up Bill to enable Justices to regulate the price of Labour, ii. 339, 340, 343. iii. 26, 39, 43, 125.

Whitmore Mr. presents a Petition from Body of Merchants in favour of Wet Dock Bill, iii. 343.

Wyndham, Mr. Charles, on Breach of Privilege, i. 426.

Wynne, Sir Watkin William, presents Petition from Wrexham disapproving of Bills, ii. 235. Withdraws it, 235.

Y.

Young, Sir William, notice of Poor Relief Bill, i. 487, 488. Moves for leave to bring in Bill to amend 9th of Geo. I. relative to Poor in their own Houses, ii. 49, 103, 214, 343. On Seditious Meeting Bill, ii. 43. On Treasonable Bill, ii. 87, 90. On Taxes, ii. 283. On Motion to have Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet burnt, ii. 511. On Petition of Merchants relative to Wet Docks, iii. 10, 11, 461. iv. 571. On Slave Trade, iii. 83, 297, 410, 416. On Dr. John Hunter's Museum. iii. 226, 228. On Negroes, iv. 69. On Pewter Pot Bill, iv. 161. On Westminster Police Bill, iv. 207.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

